

Looked After Children Education Service (LACES)

Annual Performance Report September 2018

“Education is the best
provision for the
journey into adulthood”
- Aristotle

“ *Education is the most
important weapon
which you can use to
change the world* ”
- Nelson Mandela

Foreword

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The **Looked After Children Education Service** (LACES) has responsibility to promote the educational progress and achievements of children in care on behalf of Liverpool City Council.

This report provides details of the range of support and guidance provided to schools and partners by LACES during the last academic year. It highlights the significant improvements in pupil outcomes and details some of the developments in the strategies being used to support schools to meet the needs of these vulnerable learners.

LACES has developed a reputation for ensuring that the support needed to secure school placements and meet the subsequent challenges faced by schools is both timely and effective. The partnership with schools, other statutory services and the commissioning of specialist providers, gives LACES priority access to a diverse range of provision, ensuring the most appropriate support is available to all our Children Looked After.

LACES is a small team and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and expertise over the last year and the difference this makes to children in care and the support they provide to school based staff.

Malik Killen

Chief Executive – School Improvement Liverpool

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Virtual Heads Report

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The 2017/18 school year has been another intense year of activities, in our educational support for Liverpool children in care. We had the OFSTED inspection during May, we supported a record number of children, amendments to statutory guidance now requires us to support post care children, our attainment outcomes were an improvement on the previous year, whilst we had our first permanent exclusion in 7 years.

The OFSTED inspection went quite well, although the final judgement was Requires Improvement. They advised that we improve the quality of our **Personal Education Plans** (PEPs), and we improve attainment of our children in care who still reside with their parent(s).

Our partnership working and collaboration with schools and statutory services was a key factor in the placement of many of our most vulnerable, challenging and dis-engaged children and young people. Working closely with **Social Inclusion, School Admissions, School Attendance** and **SEND** services, enabled us to place many children in care quickly and in provision appropriate to their individual needs.

We continue to commission a wide range of **learning** and **therapeutic** services, to support the educational progress of our Children Looked After. These include **Alternative Education** providers, **Counselling** services, **Private Tutors, Behaviour Management** programmes, **Play** and **Life Story** therapists and **Numeracy** support.

We collected a record number of **Personal Education Plans** (PEPs). Improvements in quality were noted, as more and more reflected the needs, targets and progress of each child, however following the inspection more still needs to be done, whilst an increased number of our **Key Stage 4** young people took advantage of our internal careers advice and guidance service.

LACES delivered Year 2 of our 3 year **BAQTS Primary module at Liverpool Hope University**. We also delivered Year 1 for the new cohort of students. These modules provide the next generation of teachers with an understanding of the needs of children in care and other vulnerable learners, the legal framework that supports their education and practical interventions on how they can make a difference. I would like to extend my thanks to **Andy Bibby** (Consultant Social Worker) for delivering a lecture on the impact of trauma and attachment as part of the Year 2 presentations.

Our **2016/17** attainment outcomes were an improvement on the previous year's performance, and they needed to be. At **Key Stage 1** outcomes significantly improved in all subjects **Reading** (by 11%), **Writing** (4%), **Maths** (9%) and **Science** (9%). At **Key Stage 2** SATs, improvements of **13%** and **3%** in **Reading** and combined **Reading Writing** and **Maths** respectively were recorded. However falls in **Writing, Maths** and combined **Grammar, Punctuation** and **Spelling** were recorded, however **60%** of our **Year 6** cohort had some form of **Special Educational Need** (SEN), which was above the national average for children in care.

At **Key Stage 4** the percentage of our young people achieving the expected level in their **GCSE Maths** and **English** was almost **18%**, a **2%** improvement on the previous year.

Provisional figures for 2017/18 pupil outcomes show continued improvements across all key stages. Validated data will be available in the new year.

As always support from our **Schools, Social Workers, Independent Reviewing Offices, Children's Homes** and **Foster Carers** has been as fantastic as ever. Despite the strain on services, resources and funding, everyone has pulled together to achieve the best outcomes we can for our children.

The LACES team of **Andrew Williams, Catherine Falco, Tony Mackrell** and **Corinne Andrew** worked tirelessly through the last academic, each of them showing enormous commitment and support for our children. There will be some significant change to the LACES team during the 2018/19 school year. **Myself** and **Tony Mackrell** will be leaving the service. I depart on **31st December 2018** and Tony as soon as his retirement has been approved. However, **School Improvement Liverpool** and **Children Services** have been extremely pro-active, and have appointed a **new** Virtual School Head and Deputy, both of whom will start on **29th October 2018**.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my most sincere **thanks** and **gratitude** to all the professionals I have had the **privilege** and **pleasure** to have worked with during my 8 years in this post. Without their **support** and **commitment**, we would have achieved a whole lot less than we did. I have many wonderful memories, lots of positive emotions and some extremely warm feelings from my experiences as LACES Manager and Virtual School Head - these I will cherish forever.

Colin Wayland

Virtual School Head



Liverpool CLA Education Profile

Liverpool had **808** children looked after continuously for 12 months at **31st March 2017** - an increase of **102** on the previous year.

Of the children in care for at least 12 months, **525** were of **compulsory school age** (age 5 on 1st September 2016) - **24** more than the year before.

54% (283) of compulsory school aged Children Looked After had some form of **Special Educational Need** (SEN). For non-Liverpool CLA, the figure was **19.3%**.

17.0% (89) of children in care had an **Education Health and Care Plan** (EHCP), compared to a figure of just **2.5%** for all Liverpool pupils.

Primary Cohort

42.3% (222) of the cohort were of primary school age

51.3% (114) attended Liverpool primary schools

6.8% (15) attended Liverpool special schools

41.0% (91) attended out of city primary schools

0.9% (2) attended out of city special schools

Secondary Cohort

57.7% (303) of the cohort were secondary school age. of these:

41.9% (127) attended liverpool secondary schools

13.2% (40) attended liverpool special schools

4.0% (12) attended alternative education provision in liverpool

32.3% (98) attended out of city secondary

7.3% (22) attended out of city special schools

0.3% (1) attended out of city alternative education provision

0.3% (1) attended an out of city hospital schools

0.7% (2) attended an out of city pupil referral unit

The proportion of Liverpool children in care whose first language was not English was **5%** at Key Stage One, **4%** at Key Stage Two (4%) and **22%** at Key Stage Four.

The above information only relates to children who were in care for 12 months or more. A further **327** children of compulsory school age, who had been in **care for less than a year** were also supported by LACES. Equating to a total school age CLA cohort of **852**.

LACES Services

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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 LACES is achieved in consultation with Designated Teachers, Social Care practitioners and young people, alongside our internal monitoring and, review and evaluation processes which measure the quality and impact of our programmes.

Our service delivery structures place an emphasis on early intervention, with the capacity to respond to critical or irregular situations.

1. 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



2. Universal Support

- Priority and Fast Track access to statutory services
- Advocacy and Representation
- Advice and Guidance (to CLA and post care children)

3. 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)
- 'Storybarn Readers Club' Reading Project (NCY 7 placed with family)
- Literacy Programme (Key Stage 1)
- Numeracy Support (Key Stage 1 and 2)
- Career Connect Independent Careers 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)
- University Mentors (Key Stage 3 and 4)
- ESOL Classes (Unaccompanied Minors)



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 give each of them the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

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The completion and submission of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) is a statutory requirement and a key document in the child's overall care plan. The PEP is also a mechanism for monitoring and promoting the educational progress of our children in care. A PEP meeting should take place every 6 months and should be attended by the school/education placement, carer, social worker and child, if appropriate. Considering the young person's views and discussing longer term aspirations are important parts of the PEP process. The PEP document provides evidence of interventions, agreed targets and progress, and identifies personalized support.

At the PEP meeting decisions are made on how Pupil Premium Plus should best be used to record targets that will improve the educational progress, school attendance and behaviour of the child. PEPs are submitted electronically, usually by the school. Upon receipt by LACES, we place a copy on the child's Liquid Logic file.

LACES' PEP Coordinator **Catherine Falco** is responsible for quality assurance of PEPs, encouraging schools to complete them and provide training to schools about the PEP process. Last academic year, **21** schools were visited and over **200** enquiries about Liverpool's PEP process were dealt with by phone or email.

The PEP form is always under constant review to ensure it is easily accessible, user friendly and effective. Recording of PEPs is linked to Pupil Premium Plus to encourage completion, and payments can be withheld if PEPs have not been received.

Carers were present at 81% of PEP meetings.
This conveys a consistent message to the child - that education is important and relevant to their lives.

Pupil Premium Plus is being spent on a diverse range of support to boost educational progress (see page 24).

61% of pupils were recorded as making expected progress

Percentage of submitted PEPs	
Liverpool Schools	75%
Merseyside Schools	7.5%
Other Schools	17.5%

Average School attendance recorded on PEPs	
Primary	97.35%
Secondary	96.1%
Average	96.1%

During the last school year we received **1043** PEPs, the highest number we have ever collected. Over **90%** of the children who have been in care for over 12 months had an up to date PEP.

Pupil Views should be completed in advance of each PEP meeting. It is an informal chat between the child/young person and the Designated Teacher. This provide an opportunity for school to ascertain the child's views and opinions, which are then fed into the PEP meeting. 88% of schools conducted pupil view meetings prior to the PEP meeting

Here is a small selection of pupil views collected from their PEPs during the 2017/18 school year:

'I would like to be a Doctor'

Year 9 girl attending Liverpool school

'L has many friends. She would like to improve her reading but feels a little bit better with her writing'

Year 2 girl attending out of city primary

'When B grows up he would like to be a hairdresser. He feels proud when his little sister shares with him'

Reception boy attending out of city primary

'S does not know what job she would like. She is a bright girl so has lots of opportunities. She would like to go to
6th form or college'

Year 10 girl attending Liverpool secondary

'L would like to go to college to study bricklaying and construction. He is really enjoying it here and has 100%
attendance'

Year 10 boy attending Liverpool AEP

'J would like to go to college also she would like to work in a children's hospice'

Year 11 girl attending out of city secondary

'I would like to be more confident in class. If I could choose a super power it would be to be invincible and
would also like to read a line at a family assembly. When I grow up I want to be a foster carer for dogs'

Year 5 boy with SEN attending Liverpool primary

'To have a smooth transition into his new school and enjoy himself. A is looking forward to this new challenge'

Year 7 boy attending out of city secondary

'R said he would like to be a 'youtuber' or a scientist when he is older'

Year 3 boy attending out of city primary

'I would like to do A-levels in school, then a Sports Science degree'

Year 11 boy attending out of city secondary

Private Tuition

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In line with the statutory guidance on 'promoting the educational achievement of Children Looked After for local authorities', LACES ensure CLA have access to Private Tuition.

For Liverpool CLA at risk of underachieving, LACES offer 1:1 tuition, primarily in English and Maths. We target our Year 5, 6, 10 and 11 pupils, to support their preparation for SATs and GCSEs. All Liverpool children in care, irrespective of where they are placed, have access to this service. Tutors are supplied through several national Private Tuition Agencies, who meet all safeguarding requirements, and are subject to LACES monitoring and evaluation to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

We also provide tutors for our children who are between schools. When a child moves care placement they often have to wait for a new school placement. During these periods, LACES will quickly arrange home tuition until a school place has been secured.

NCY	Liverpool Schools Number of Pupils	Out of City Schools Number of Pupils	Total Number of Pupils
1 - 2	0	0	0
3 - 6	8	5	13
7 - 9	4	3	7
10 - 11	11	11	22
Post 16	2	2	4
Total	25	21	46

Over the past academic year, 46 pupils accessed private tuition. Pupils are referred to a private tutor following consultation with the carer, school and social worker. Those pupils who are working towards GCSEs and SATs will receive an initial block of 10 sessions. Towards the end of these sessions a decision is then made on whether further tuition is required. If so, another block of 5 or 10 sessions is booked.

Our children who are waiting for a school place will usually receive between 2 and 4 hours of tuition per day until they start school.

During 2017/18, LACES funded over **1000** hours of private tuition - this is our highest amount ever. We will continue to support our children and young people with fast track access to tuition, to ensure they are given every opportunity to achieve the highest levels of attainment.



Evaluation of tuition

Following each period of tuition the tutor provides a written report. As part of this evaluation, carers and pupils are asked to present their views on how the tuition was for them. The feedback revealed that all carers and young people were pleased with how the sessions went. Here is a selection of their comments:

Tutors' comments

'The progress of E this term has been good, and his confidence is clearly building on a range of topic areas for her studies. Poetry is the main area to work on, for interpretative textual analysis'

'He has made great progress. We have completed Shakespeare's Julius Caesar and he has written an essay on the play. His maths is very good and he is continuing to develop and learn. He has the potential for high grades in English and Maths'

'K has made very encouraging progress throughout the term, and continues to work hard both in school and at home'

'Encouraging start made to the work so far by D who is very willing to tackle all aspects of his SPAG and reading work'

'M's spelling and writing has improved considerably. Her times tables remain a challenge and need weekly attention to improve'

Comments from carers

Carers were asked what has been the best thing about tuition?

'Seeing C's confidence grow every week'

'The 1:1 tuition allowed quiet quality time to listen and concentrate on the topics being taught'

'I am very satisfied with the tuition – my boys respond much better with this'

'P felt confident at home and was able to engage with the tutor on a one to one basis and remain focused'

Comments from CLA

'Will was a good tutor for me. He gave me loads of revision to help me try and get my GCSEs. Thank you, Will!'

'I have enjoyed working with Janet'

Early Intervention Reading Programme

We have completed our seventh year of this programme that 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 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 2017, we contacted all Liverpool Head Teachers that had a CLA child in their Reception, to offer additional literacy support at the start of Year 1. 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.

The logistics of recruiting or identifying, training and DBS checking appropriate reading helpers was achieved with planning and timely actions. The majority of the reading helpers were in place by the middle of the autumn term 2017. Each pupil received 1:1 support until the end of the summer term 2018. 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.

Number of Liverpool Schools	19
Number of Merseyside schools	1
Number of Year 1 CLA	22
Other vulnerable pupils in these schools, including CLA not in Year 1	59
Total number of CLA beneficiaries	32



During 2017-2018, 23 Beanstalk Reading Helpers supported 59 looked after and vulnerable children in 19 Liverpool primary schools

Here are some comments from the children, their class teachers and reading helpers



'I feel happy because I like working with Jacqui. I like reading about Princesses and Frozen'



'I like Girl's rock books because we share the characters and make up our own names for them'

'The best thing about my Beanstalk sessions are... the games ...and the books'

'R has made great progress in his reading. He has become more confident and enjoys the time he spends with Mrs A. He is now willing to read independently and read in small groups. He has built a very trusting relationship with his reading helper'

T's Reading Helper says ... 'his reading has developed a lot over the past 9 months. He is not yet at the stage of identifying the particular books he likes to read but he is quite willing to try something new and he enjoys a challenge. He is very determined'

T's Class teacher says... 'he enjoys sharing stories and being heard. He has loved the engagement and the 1:1 time to discuss and share his views about reading'



'L in **Year 1** has increased her confidence and her class teacher is overjoyed with her change in attitude towards reading. L loves the sessions and is eager to read in school and at home. Her fluency in reading has improved significantly. We are thrilled with the service'



By Year 1 boy

R's Reading Helper says... 'R was a fairly fluent reader when I first met her and we read lots of Girls Rock as she enjoyed them and they helped her improve her expression when reading aloud. She has since progressed onto much harder, smaller print paperbacks with no pictures in'

E's Reading Helper says ... 'his enthusiasm for the sessions has increased and he has become much more involved in discussing books and his likes and dislikes. Throughout the year his confidence has grown with reading and wanting to get more involved in the sessions. He has become very good at discussing stories and making predictions. His conversation and language has developed greatly.. I feel the one to one contact has been great for him and has increased his confidence with reading and interaction with others' (**Year 1 boy**)

Numbers Count

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LACES funded **two primary school places** on the **Numbers Count** training programme during the 2017/18 school year. The schools invited to participate were identified due to having a high number of Children in Care on their school roll. The Impact of the training was as follows:

School One

The nominated Numbers Count teacher stated that she “thoroughly enjoyed the training and with the support of her Head teacher, has implemented the programme very effectively. The first cohort of children making an average of **25 months progress** in Number age in 40 lessons. In addition to the data, the teacher commented on how the children had developed confidence in **maths** and this has been evident through her observations of the children in the classroom since they completed the programme.

School Two

The Numbers Count teacher at the 2nd Primary School initially had difficulties getting the programme up and running, as she is also the Safeguarding Officer and had a number of ongoing issues to deal with during the Autumn term, she is also RE lead and the school was subject to an RE inspection in the Spring term, so unfortunately there was a significant delay in commencing the programme. This led to her being taken off the programme. However, she is up and running and delivering the sessions and we expect some initial outcomes data by the end of the Autumn term of 2018/19.

LACES will continue to support the numbers count programme into the 2018/19 academic year.



Classroom Support



During the last academic year, LACES arranged **classroom support or Teaching Assistant (TA) support** for pupils whose learning was being adversely affected by challenging behaviour. We provided either, a Teaching Assistant through supply or funded the school so they could identify the additional support. This provision is targeted at children who are at serious risk of being permanently excluded or whose behaviour is impacting on their educational progress.

Before agreeing classroom or TA support, LACES will always consider the following:

- Has something happened in the pupil's personal life that may have triggered their reaction? Is this something that can be addressed and may lead to improved behaviour in the short term?
- Have the school made reasonable efforts to address the pupil's behaviour, as interventions should be given a realistic amount of time to have an impact?
- What support do school require to ensure the pupil is not excluded and remains in their class?
- School should first use the pupils Pupil Premium Plus Grant, to support the child.

Between **September 2017** and **July 2018**, LACES supported **36** children and young people, with additional classroom support, mostly primary school pupils - **27** attended Liverpool Schools and **9** were educated out of city. In all cases, it was agreed in consultation between LACES, the school, social worker, carer and other appropriate professionals that classroom support was an appropriate intervention. However, this support cannot be indefinite, and there has to be in place a more sustainable plan of support, such as:

- If classroom support is part of a child's **transition** between schools, this will be in place for a maximum of one term. If the child does not settle in this period, schools are encouraged to submit a **High Needs Funding** application, for long term support.
- If the TA is to support challenging behaviour and does not lead to improvements, the school should consider a **High Needs Funding** or an **Education Health and Care (EHCP)** application.

The impact of additional classroom support or TA has been encouraging, with **26** of the children supported, remaining on their school roll and re-engaging with their education. **Eight** transferred to other schools and **two** were moved to more specialist provision, namely the Primary Support Centre. These were managed in consultation with Social Inclusion. **Five** of this cohort were subsequently assessed for Education, Health and Care Plans.

'I'm so happy that L can start her transition, thanks to LACES support of L and our school. I am very grateful indeed.' **Head Teacher Liverpool Primary School**

Educational Psychology Service

During the 2017/18 academic year, LACES had access to **4** Senior Educational Psychologists - **Dr Joanne Bowden, Dr Suzanne Craig, Dr Alice Tilley and Dr Jenny Dutton**. This service has been a wonderful resource for our Children Looked After for the past **10 years**. We especially target our children who attend schools outside of the city, to ensure there are no delays when they require Ed Psych intervention. Our Education Psychologists provide a range of services, including advice to school about in-school interventions/strategies, cognitive assessments and training.

During the 2017/18 school year, Joanne, Suzanne, Jenny and Alice supported 39 Liverpool Children Looked After attending schools in Wirral, Lancashire, Halton, Sefton, St Helen's, Knowsley, Bolton, Sheffield and Liverpool.

The team conducted **24 Cognitive assessments**, which supported **21** Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) applications. However, the most significant aspect of our Education Psychology support is the advice and guidance they provide to schools, to help them create safe and nurturing learning environments and interventions that provide therapeutic stimulus for our most difficult to engage and challenging children.

Number of Children Supported	Number who Remained in their School	Transferred to more appropriate Provision
39	22	17

For children who attend school in the city, our Education Psychologists work in partnership with Liverpool's Primary Consortia Framework, to ensure the needs of Children Looked After are given priority when referred to the consortia, whilst they provide advice, guidance and intervention strategies for our children on roll at Liverpool secondary schools.

When we evaluate the support provided by our Ed Psychs, the children supported are less likely to have fixed term exclusions, and/or be removed from the classroom.

'Thank you so very much for arranging this assessment. I was at a meeting with the Assistant Head at his new school. D is settling in slowly, but still struggles socially and academically, so this assessment is really helpful' Adoption Service

CAMHS Counselling

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‘Relational Trauma requires Relational Repair’ (Dr. Karen Treisman. (2017)

During the last academic year, LACES continued to commission the **Young Person’s Advisory Service (YPAS)**, with **Counsellor Sonia Lee** continuing to deliver the service from an **Attachment Framework**.

A LACES referral via YPAS provides a fast track therapeutic counselling service, primarily for **Key Stage 3 and 4 cohorts**. This service is specifically tailored for those young people who are either disengaged from education, at risk of exclusion from school, and/or have experienced some emotional trauma.

The service is delivered wherever is most convenient for the Young Person, either at school or at one of the YPAS Hubs, and the young person is part of the discussion about venue. All referrals are made in consultation with the school, social worker, carer and other appropriate partners.

An initial introduction/assessment meeting is arranged and if the young person wants to engage, the therapeutic process commences. At any point the young person can cease the therapeutic process if they decide that it isn’t the right time for them to engage in counselling.

An essential part of the provision is for our Counsellor to attend CLA reviews, Care Plan Meetings, Strategy Meetings and Review meetings with Social Workers, Teachers and Parents/Foster Carers to discuss intervention and progress, and to advocate for the young person if required. Psycho-education is also provided to the school and Parents/Carers, if it will enhance the young persons progress. On average, each young person attended approximately 11 counselling sessions.

The number of sessions provided varies dependent upon the need and complexity, varying from a standard 9 sessions, however many of these young people require more intensive support, for instance one young person had **54 Sessions**.

Number of Pupils Supported Sept 2017-June 2018	Remained in School/Education Placement	Moved to more appropriate provision	Refused to engage or did not complete their sessions	Stepped up to Specialist CAMHS
27	26	1	4	3

‘Our young person has enjoyed recent sessions with Sonia Lee and we feel she has benefited greatly being able to talk and feel comfortable. The support from YPAS is helping her move forward’ Foster Carer



Life Story Therapy

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In academic year 2017-18, LACES referred **7 children** for Life Story Therapy - 6 receiving direct life story therapy, and one social worker who has been provided with professional supervision so they can carry out the life story work.

These cases are on-going so final evaluations are yet to be completed. However, feedback from the children, carers, and schools has been positive. Some children still experience difficulties and are supported through these. For others, their needs are so complex that the full impact of this work will take a long time to have an effect. For some this work is helping them to be more settled and feel happier with their life, such as at school, home, with relationships and their identity.

Several children have said that this is the first time they have talked about their feelings. Others say the confusion about their life history has disrupted their everyday lives, but now feel they are gaining some understanding. Others have said it is important to them to have a stronger sense of identity.

Schools feel they are being supported when therapeutic work is on-going, because the child's needs are being shared and addressed holistically. Some carers have said they have gained more understanding of the child's history, this has helped them to deal with challenging behaviours and emotions.

In complex cases a therapeutic element is essential, something that requires a practitioner with therapeutic training. In other cases, social workers can be supported to carry out the work themselves.

Before addressing the child's history, life story therapy addresses feelings, thoughts and actions, the way the brain works, and the impact of experiences on functioning and learning to develop positive strategies to deal with feelings.

Life story therapy is a creative, dynamic intervention where the child explores their history and experiences, in order to help them make sense of their life so far. This is a therapeutic process to help the child understand the impact of their experiences, and to learn to develop positive strategies to regulate difficult feelings, build relationships, and achieve emotional well-being.

Paula Price

Creative Child Therapist



Play Therapy

Since September 2016, LACES has had our own fully qualified Play Therapist **Ann Sullivan**. This service has been invaluable as it has enabled us to provide a recognised therapeutic intervention for some of our most vulnerable Key Stage One and Two children in care. During the last academic year, Anne worked with **13** of our most challenging CLA. Eight of these children attended Liverpool schools, four were in out of city schools and one at the primary education centre.

All referrals to our Play Therapist are made in consultation with the school, carer, Social Worker and any other professionals working with the child. Once Anne receives a referral she will conduct a full assessment of the child's suitability for this type of intervention. All the children referred last academic year had displayed challenging behaviours in the classroom and all were at risk of permanent exclusion, whilst each had been removed from the classroom on numerous occasions, as schools struggled to manage their behaviours. Each child was also provided with additional Teaching Assistant (TA) support in their classroom (see page 15).

Ann provides an initial 10 sessions of Play Therapy, in the school setting. These are either during the school day or as additional support after school. In addition Ann delivers toolkit sessions with the class teacher and teaching assistant, to ensure her strategies are being delivered consistently throughout the school day.

Where Attended School	Number of Children Supported	Impact of Intervention
Liverpool Schools	8	6 Remained in their school 2 Now have EHCP's and attend specialist provision
Out of City Schools	4	2 Remained in their school 2 Now have EHCP's and attend specialist Provision
Primary Education Centre	1	This child was transferred out of City with on-site education. An EHCP application has been submitted

The impact of Play Therapy and other interventions, resulted in 8 of the 13 children remaining in their school, with only one fixed term exclusion and a significant reduction in the number of classroom removals amongst these children.



Independent Careers Information, Advice & Guidance

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Andrew Williams, LACES Education Support Officer, continues to provide our Key Stage 4 Young People in Care with independent careers information, advice and guidance. We particularly focused on those young people who were disengaged from education, less likely to achieve GCSE success, have recently left secure accommodation or were vocationally undecided.

All young people referred receive support choosing the education and/or training they need to get the careers they would like in adult life. Location, time and date of interviews are agreed in consultation with the young person, their school, carer and social worker.

During the last academic year, Andrew personally advised **22** of our young people, agreeing personal action plans for 18 of them. 17 of these young people lived in Liverpool and 5 in other parts of Merseyside. Those without action plans were current year 9s who re-engaged with their education.

Information, Advice and Guidance is based on:

- Choosing subjects to study at school, college or university
- Current and future job trends and opportunities
- Career planning and career options
- Further and higher education
- Apprenticeships and training opportunities
- Entry routes and the skills and qualifications required for particular jobs
- Support with transition into:
 - Employment
 - (Pre) Apprenticeships
 - Training
 - Sixth form
 - College
 - Personal Development Opportunities



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 learning provider and/or work placement. This can be used for items that will support their education including additional tuition, educational materials, course fees, transport or equipment.

ESOL Classes for Unaccompanied minors

LACES and **Al-Ghazali Centre** have been working in partnership to offer **unaccompanied** minors with essential educational and recreational services since **November 2016**. The services consist of **English language sessions, Youth club** and **Supplementary School**. The process for access to these services are initially through referrals from the LACES team, by completion of individual referral forms. The young person attends an assessment and is then allocated a suitable English class commensurate to their level. The English classes aim to engage the young people and improve essential speaking, listening, reading and writing skills that they will require for everyday life in the UK. Each young person has a class folder which shows the work completed and their progress.

The Al Ghazali Centre also offer **social** and **recreational** activities in their youth club twice a week, delivering activities such as pool, table tennis, Xbox, PlayStation and football. The Supplementary School offers Arabic language, cultural and Islamic studies. The Youth Club and Supplementary School are optional and can be attended on an informal basis, based on the young person's interests.

We have had **16 unaccompanied minors** attending the English classes at Al-Ghazali during 2017/18, most of whom have progressed into mainstream education or college. The unaccompanied minors come from a variety of countries such as Afghanistan, Syria, Angola, Kurdistan, Sudan, Vietnam and Eritrea. The languages spoken by the young people that have attended are Kurdish Sorani, Kurdish Badini, Persian, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Tigrinya and Arabic.

I would like to extend LACES thanks for work of **Shadia, Leyla** and **Ahmed** for all their hard work developing this project.



Higher Education



During the last academic year, LACES continued to work in partnership with Liverpool Hope University, School of Teacher Education. We delivered **Year 2** of our **Vulnerable Learners** module on the **3 year BA QTS** (Qualified Teacher Status) and Year 1 for the new student intake. There are around **150** students in each year group. The programme is delivered as follows:

Year 1 - Introduction to Children Looked After (1x1 hour session)

- Demographic Profile of children in care
- Background around why children are placed in care
- Awareness of the Statutory Guidance that supports the education of children in care

Year 2 - Understanding the needs of Children Looked After (2x1 hour sessions)

- Understanding the impact on education of attachment disorder and emotional trauma
- The legal framework and Government policy that supports educational progress
- Year one refresher

Year 3 - Interventions and Support – Making a Difference (2 x 1 hour workshops from a choice of 5 options)

The lectures and workshops focus on developing the student teacher's knowledge and awareness of the educational needs of Children Looked After, and to inspire them to make a difference in school settings.

During the year, we have also delivered 4 lectures to over 400 returning Post Graduates and students on other courses, to raise their awareness of the educational needs of CLA, as they refine and develop their teaching skills in the classroom or in preparation of them becoming a teacher.



Cornerstones Foundation



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Cornerstones is a registered charity whose primary aim is to create a range of opportunities that will have a lifelong impact on the quality of life, for many of Liverpool's most disengaged and vulnerable young people. LACES work in partnership with Cornerstones to deliver a Young Peoples Award Project and Post 16 vocational opportunities.

Young Peoples Award

This project encourages children in care aged **7yrs – 13yrs**, to complete a range of tasks that gain the child rewards upon completion. The aim is to improve each child's communication skills, life experiences and personal aspirations. The tasks become more difficult, as the value of the incentives grow. Upon completion of each series of tasks the young person achieves an award in an ascending order of Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. **30** Children After Looked are currently registered on the programme.

Any Child in care who wants to register onto the Young Peoples Award can do so at:
www.youngpeoplesaward.co.uk

Post 16 Vocational Opportunities

Cornerstones aim to remove the barriers that reduce vocational, educational and training opportunities for young people, who are at risk of becoming dis-enfranchised from the world of work and education. Cornerstones has a growing membership of private and public sector companies who want to improve their corporate social responsibility foot print, so are eager to provide vocational opportunities to our most vulnerable and dis-engaged young people through:

- **Work experience**
- **Internships**
- **Vocational Training**
- **Educational support/Mentoring**
- **(Pre) Apprenticeships**

Each young person who is referred to a Cornerstones company will receive careers advice, mentoring, CV writing support, confidence and self-esteem coaching, and interview training.

Last year, one young person began work experience with a local construction company with the prospect of an apprenticeship, provided by Cornerstones Trustee **Paul Flanagan** (The Flanagan Group). Another Child Looked After had some work experience in Queen's Council Chambers as part of her ambition to study law, this was arranged by **Iain Goldrein** QC Chair of Cornerstones.

We are working with another trustee **Marcus McGee**, General Manager of the **Hilton Hotel** in Liverpool One and **Paula Davies** HR Manager with **North West Ambulance Service** to create apprenticeship opportunities within these companies/services.

Pupil Premium Plus

Virtual School Heads (VSH) are responsible for making sure there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus (PPP), to improve the educational progress of Children Looked After by their local authority.

PPP is allocated on a per capita basis, based on the number of children who spent at least one day in care during the previous financial year. However, the statutory guidance gives the VSH, overall responsibility in determining how the grant is allocated.

The VSH manages the grant to improve outcomes and achieve targets as identified in Personal Education Plans. We monitor expenditure through the completion of the appropriate section of the PEP.

Payment Period	1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018
2 Eligibility Criteria	Pupils aged 4-15yrs on 31st August 2015 and were in care on the 1st April 2017
Entitlement and Allocation	Each eligible Pupil received between £800 - £1900 Most 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
Number of Liverpool Pupils Awarded	877 Liverpool Children Looked After received an award
Amount Paid	Awards totalled £1.66m
Monitoring	Pupil Premium Plus 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 the eligible pupil to improve their educational progress. For some pupils, it could be about raising their confidence, self-esteem or improving their engagement in learning. Pupil Premium provides schools the opportunity to be creative in the support they provide, to enable them to achieve their aspirations and reach their full potential

To find further information surrounding the above and Post LAC Pupil Premium (Adoption, SGO, AO) please visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-2017-to-2018

How Pupil Premium was spent in 2017/18.....

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 multiple services and interventions, as illustrated below:

Funding was used by **53%** (391) of our CLA to enable participation in school trips



41% (288) 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 **33%** (226), Small Group Work **41%** (291) and **37%** (273) receiving 1:1 Tuition



Child Psychotherapists were acquired for **19%** (95) of our pupils



Access to enrichment activities at **42%** (301) and the purchase of IT equipment **31%** (197) is evidence of the creative and targeted approach being used by schools in the expenditure of Pupil Premium Plus



Designated Teachers

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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 progress and Achievements of all Children Looked After on their school roll. DTs can make a positive difference by promoting a whole school approach, where the individual learning and emotional needs of every child in care are given priority, in school planning and allocation of resources.

LACES support our Designated Teachers and make ourselves accessible for advice, support and guidance, irrespective of where their school is located. We use a range of approaches to ensure schools have immediate contact with our service through:

Enquiries

Telephone and e-mail contact. LACES responded to **716** enquiries from schools – this was 39% of all new enquiries during 2017/2018 academic year. Most popular topics were Pupil Premium Plus, PEPs, Pupil Behaviour and Tuition

Termly Newsletter

LACES circulate a termly newsletter entitled **Looked After and Learning**. This publication enables us to keep DTs up to date with good practice, changes in statutory guidance and all issues relating to the education of children in care. The newsletter is circulated electronically to all DTs and can also be found on the SIL/LACES web pages. <https://www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/teams-LACES>

Designated Teacher Visits

During 2016/17 academic year, LACES visited **14 schools** across Merseyside to review how schools support the educational progress of their Children Looked After, and explore good practice that can be shared with other schools. We plan to increase the number of school visits in 2018/19.

Designated Teacher Training

LACES provide a range of training opportunities for our Designated Teachers during 2017/18.

These including:

Fresh CAMHS Event, Lego Therapy and Numbers Count training.

Whilst almost 80 Liverpool schools were represented at the **North West Virtual Head Conference in March 2018.**

All these events were free of charge.

Success Story - Sophie White

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"I was 'naughty', I was 'bad' but that was due to the childhood I had. I lived with families who showed me the purest love, humanity and kindness I had ever experienced. In the snap of a finger, I was taken away to another house, never to see the families who shown me love again. Almost grieving for loved ones still alive, ever so strange, anger, frustration, sadness, confusion, hurt, heartbreak and loss is how I felt. No wonder I was a wrecking ball in class.

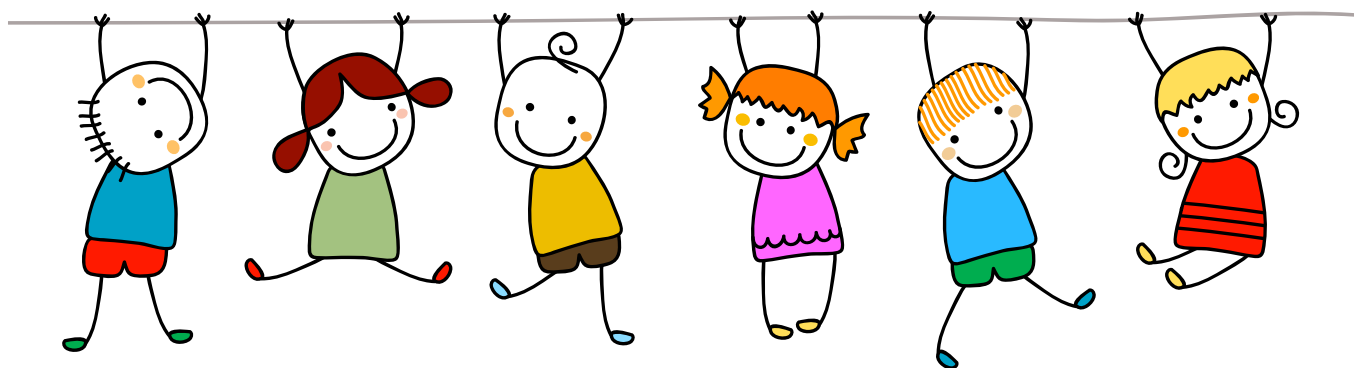
There is always a reason for bad behaviour, right? Meaningful punishment was the way forward with me. A cup of tea with the head of year, seriously? This is the worst punishment ever, I thought. But actually it was the best.

'You can go to university' my head of year said. Not me that's for posh people, people like me don't go to university. I'm thick, my mum told me, I never forget. 'You can, you can' she told me I could. She grew up on a council estate like me and she went to university. Staff at my school started to champion me, push me, praise me, told me I could, helped me, supported me and showed me the greatest humanity. School is imperative for Children Looked After. After all education and most importantly, teachers are the ones who saved me when I 'slipped through the net'.

Now I am a Social Worker in London. Who would have thought it eh?!

To me, education is the way out, and it is the only way."

Sophie White – Previous CLA



Presentations, Training and Briefings

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An important element of LACES delivery plan is to raise awareness and improve understanding of the educational needs of children in care. Between September 2017 and July 2018, a total of 789 teachers, carers, business managers and student teachers attended our training event.

Date	Content	Beneficiaries
October 2017	Introduction to the impact of Trauma and Attachment on the education of Children Looked After	150 Year 1 BAQT (Primary) Students at Hope University
October 2017	Presentation about Post CLA educational support	18 Kinship and Post Care Carers
November 2017	The Impact of Trauma and Attachment on the educational progress of children in care	160 Early Years Education Students at Hope University
December 2017	The Impact of Trauma and Attachment on the educational progress of children in care	150 BAQT (Primary) Post Graduates at Hope University
February 2018	Pupil Premium Plus funding for children in care	130 Liverpool School Business Managers
March 2018	LACES Services, PEPs and Pupil Premium	19 Foster Carers
April 2018	Impact of Attachment Disorder and the legal framework for improving the education of children in care	150 Year 2 BAQT (Primary) Students at Hope University
May 2018	LACES Services, PEPs and Pupil Premium	12 Teachers and School SENCO



'Thank you so very much for coming to Hope today and delivering the lecture....it was really helpful and illuminating for the students. We are so appreciative' Level One Lead - Early Childhood, Liverpool Hope University

'Fantastic! Thanks so much. The lecture was fab and feedback from trainees was excellent! Thanks again' PGCE (Primary) Lead - Hope University

Enquiries

Between **September 2017** and **July 2018**, LACES received 1813 telephone and email enquiries – 209 (11%) more than the previous year. This would appear to reflect the increase in the number of children taken into care, during the last academic year.



Just over **50%** of all enquiries concerned Pupil Premium Plus or PEPs. We also had a significant number of contacts in respect of Tuition, Behaviour Support and School admissions/transfers. Our enquiries were mostly received from schools and social workers. However, foster carers, care providers 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, under-achievement or have poor school attendance records. This often requires LACES officers to attend multi-agency meetings to agree the most appropriate support and interventions.

Meetings Attended by LACES Officers			
School Meetings		CLA Reviews	
Liverpool	Out of City	Liverpool	Out of City
131	57	84	38

Feedback

The team have been overwhelmed by the number of expressions of gratitude we have received. These are very much appreciated and are recognition that our services are making a difference. Here is a small sample of what they said...

'Thank you for your support. The meeting was really useful and it really helped to have LACES' input'
- Assistant Head Liverpool Secondary School

'I'm speechless! You have made me very emotional and I do not know how to thank you enough. The best thing we can do for K is to keep him in our school and local community. This is going to make such a difference to him and to his new family'
- Head Teacher Liverpool Primary

'Thanks so much, thank you, thank you, thank you!!!!'
- Social Worker

'Thanks, that's a really comprehensive answer and I've got all I need now. It's very much appreciated'
- Head Teacher Liverpool Secondary School

'That sounds great. Thank you very much for all LACES' hard work and efforts'
- Social Worker

'I cannot thank you enough for your support and decisive action. It is great to know that when we need this type of support that it is there in force! I really do appreciate it, as does her teacher who was struggling to deal with what she was experiencing'
- Head Teacher Liverpool Primary School

'Thank you so much for your help, to see her happy and enthusiastic again is so wonderful, and without you she would not be'
- Foster Carer

'That is absolutely amazing. We are so grateful, this will really make a difference. Many, many thanks Again'
- Assistant Head Teacher Liverpool Primary

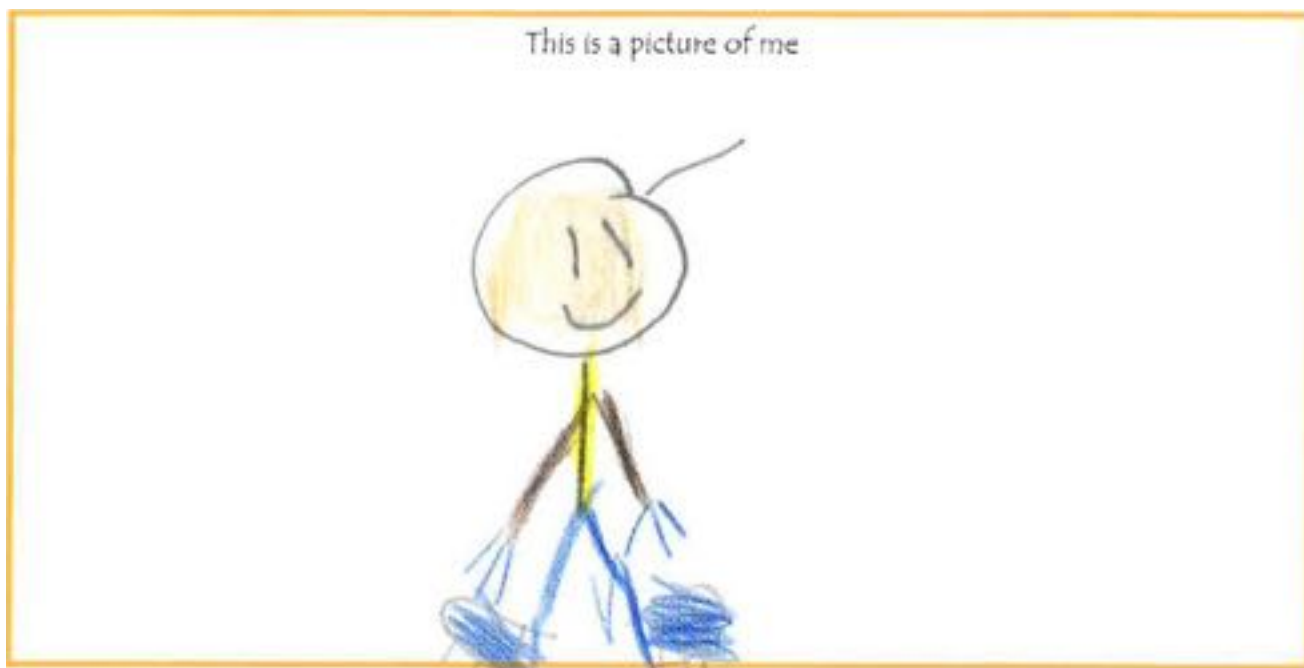
'Thank you for the update. I have asked all staff involved to ensure that the PEPs are up to date. Thanks for the PEP tips too. It is lovely to know that your team are there to offer additional support - big thank you!'
- Head Teacher Liverpool Primary

'Thank you for the email and many thanks for your time and for answering my questions this morning. You have been very helpful'
- Foster Carer

'Thank you for that and thank-you for such a quick response. The additional funding will make such a difference to L in school'
- SENCO Out of City Primary

'This is wonderful news!!! Thank you very much indeed this will be a huge help for G and her family. Thank you!'
- Assistant Head Liverpool Secondary

'You have been very helpful especially liaising with Lancashire education service to follow up on a school placement'
- Social Worker



Year 2 Looked After Child (and his basketball)

School Improvement
Liverpool

Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road
Liverpool, L17 7BN

Phone: 0151 233 3901
Email: sil@si.liverpool.gov.uk
Web: www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk

