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Catherine George – Achievement Co-ordinator

Shakilla Iqbal – Achievement Co-ordinator

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The role of the Kirklees Virtual School

Improving the educational outcomes for children in care is a priority for national and local government. The evidence is clear – whatever else goes wrong in children’s lives, their life chances are significantly improved when they achieve positive educational outcomes.

Local authorities and their Directors of Children’s Services are the corporate parents for children in care, with statutory, moral and professional responsibilities to maximise their health, social, educational and economic outcomes.

The Virtual School will:

- Work with statutory and key partner agencies to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved for looked after children;
- Increase the educational outcomes and narrow the learning gap of looked after children in the care of Kirklees by challenging their schools and other education providers to provide the highest levels of support and ambition for them; and
- Enable our looked after children to access broad and rich learning experiences and be “Rounded, Resilient and Ready” in line with the Learning services ambition for all its children.

Key Responsibilities

The Virtual School will:-

- Identify benchmarking data and good practice to enable services to “narrow the gap” Monitor the achievement and progress of the cohort to identify those children at significant risk of under achievement.
- Prioritise the deployment of its own resources to support them using evidence based interventions and to encourage multi-agency approaches to the needs of looked after children.
- Influence the work of schools and other education providers through its close links with the Kirklees Learning Service.
- Influence other children’s services professionals, and through them carers, to ensure their practice minimises the risks to the educational outcomes of looked after children.
- Use the Personal Education Planning process to ensure its understanding of the pupils on its roll is accurate and up-to-date and that the deployment of Pupil Premium Plus encourages effective planning and improvement in attainment and progress of children.
- Challenge and support schools and other education providers to ensure that they are improving outcomes for individual pupils.
- Ensure it has sufficient intelligence about looked after children entering primary and secondary education phases at the normal, and in-year, points of transition that it can ensure they receive the support they need swiftly.
- Ensure it has appropriate systems in place to inform services supporting the transition of looked after children to post-16 education, employment and training, and to meet the statutory duties of the Virtual School Head to all looked after children from 0- 18 (25 with SEND).
- Ensure the voice of the child is heard, and has influence, at the level of individual personal education plans as well as through the Children in Care Council.