

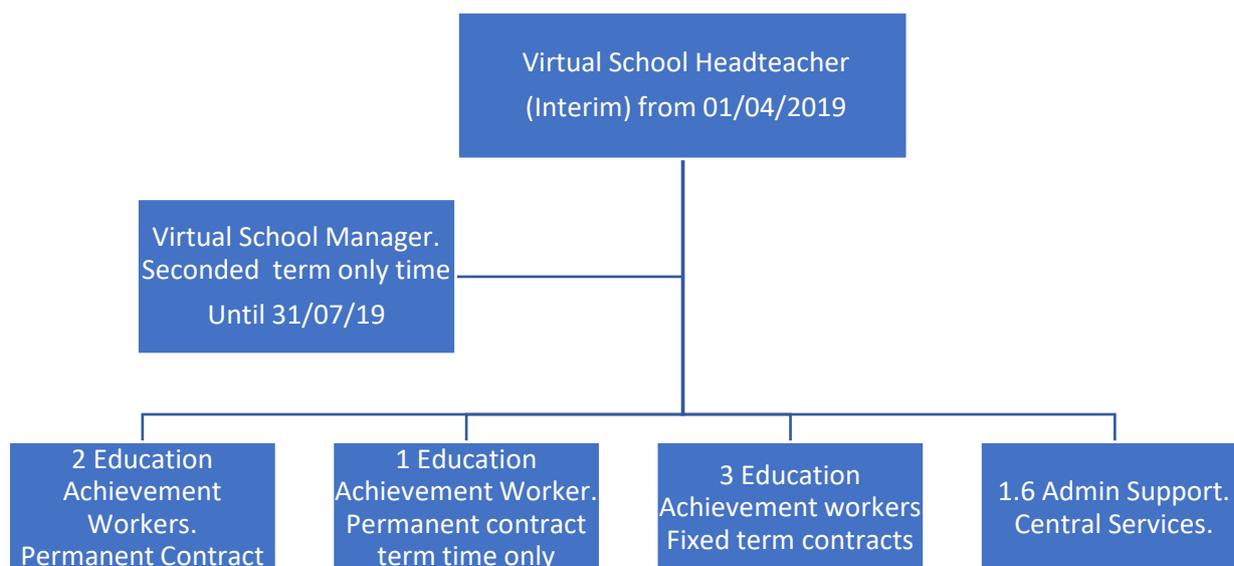
# Newcastle Virtual School Annual Report 2018/19



**Karl Harms.**  
**Virtual School Headteacher (Interim)**  
**January 2020**

## Newcastle Virtual School: Profile and Vulnerabilities.

The role of the Virtual School is to monitor the progress and opportunities of pupils who are looked after by Newcastle City Council. The post of Virtual School Headteacher is a statutory requirement and is supported by 8 team members.



The Virtual School works with Children's Social Care, Schools and Carers to ensure that the best outcomes for the child are achieved through individual Personal Educational Plans.

Looked after children are more likely to have Special Educational Needs which adds to their vulnerability. They are susceptible to school moves and there may have been missed opportunities to apply for an EHCP assessment of needs. The Virtual School works closely with the SEN assessment service and commissions LA educational psychologists to give guidance and advice related to individual educational needs to assist in maintaining or identifying school places.

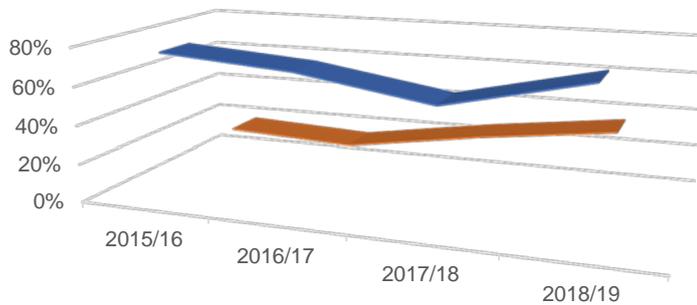
**670 children are in Local Authority Care  
595 students are registered with the Virtual School.**

**This is 1% of Newcastle children  
417 are of statutory school age.  
37% are educated outside Newcastle.  
450 have been in care for more than a year.**

Capita Data Base 31<sup>st</sup> Augusts 2018

The Virtual School roll is dynamic and reflects the challenges that are placed upon the stability of looked after children. This is demonstrated by the changes in school, home and residential placements that children experience.

Placement and school changes as a percentage the LAC and Virtual School cohort.



	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Placement Change	76%	71%	60%	76%
School Change	19%	16%	27%	36%

There has been a rise in the changes of school paces within the LAC cohort. Work will be undertaken with schools to ensure that students remain on roll wherever possible through appropriate support rather than the use of managed moves, exclusion and in year transfers.

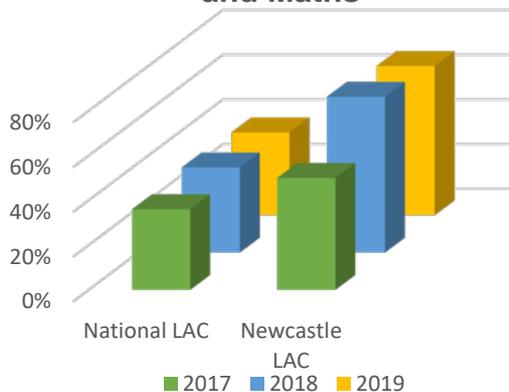
(Capita One data base.)

**12.5% of Newcastle Virtual School students have an EHCP.**  
**3.1% of all students nationally have an EHCP.**  
**19.7% of the Virtual School experienced one or more school changes.**  
**This was 3% higher than national comparisons.**

LAIT Local Authority Interactive Tool 2018/19

## LAC Achievement and Progress

**KS1: Above expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths**



In the early years cohort 50% of children achieved a good level of development.

Key Stage 1 children achieved above the national expected standard in all in all areas.

In reading 66.7% achieved this level, compared with 52% nationally. In writing it was 66.7% compared to 42% nationally and Maths it was 66.7% compared to 49%. nationally

This success is reflected in a positive three-year trend in all individual subjects.

In Key Stage 2 57% of children achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths.

This was 19% above the national comparison. Over the last three years progress made from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is above national in all areas.

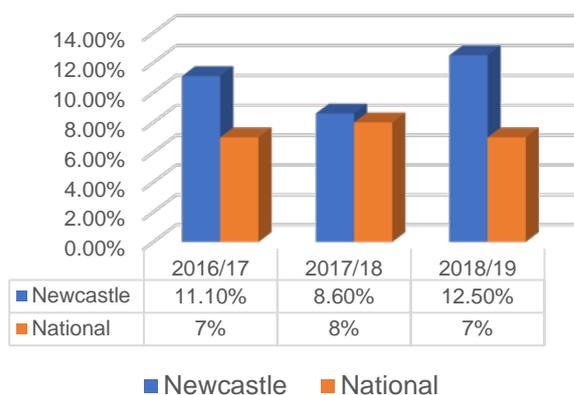
In Reading it is +1.8 compared to +0.5, in Writing it is +0.8 compared to +0.1 and Maths it is +0.9 compared to +0.2.

(NCER: National Consortium Examination Results)

### KS2: Above expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths.



### Key Stage 4: Achieving 5+ English and Maths



Newcastle LAC have been above national comparison for the past three years.

The attainment 8 score sits above national comparison having risen by 1.3 compared to 0.2 nationally since 2016/17

The progress 8 score is 0.22 above national comparison and represents a three-year trend of +0.22.

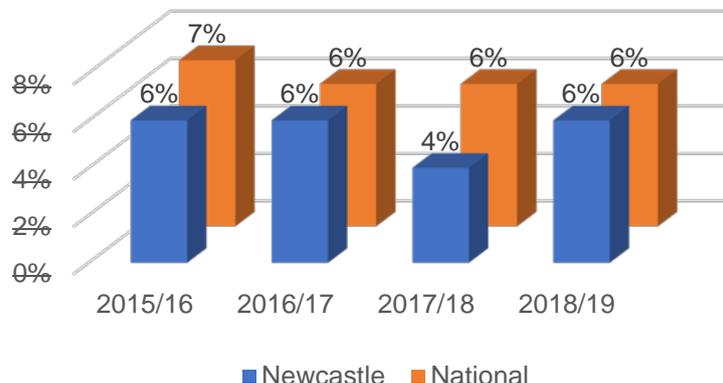
(NCER: National Consortium Examination Results)

Following a reduction in care leavers accessing higher education in 2017/18 the percentage has risen in 2018/19 to match the national average.

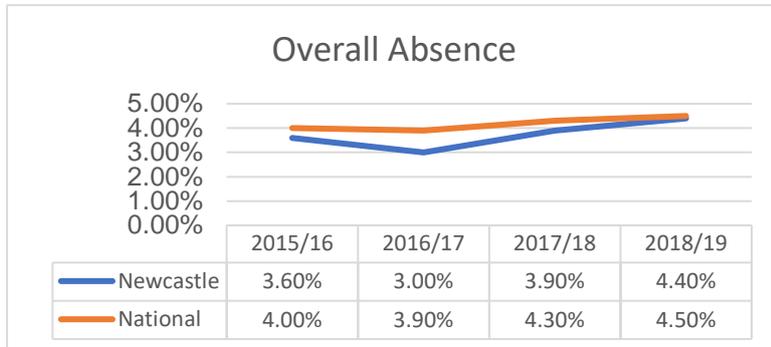
In 2018/19, 41% of post 16 LAC were not in education, employment and training. This will be addressed with closer working between the Virtual School and Connexions.

(LAIT)

### Percentage of Care Leavers in Higher Education.

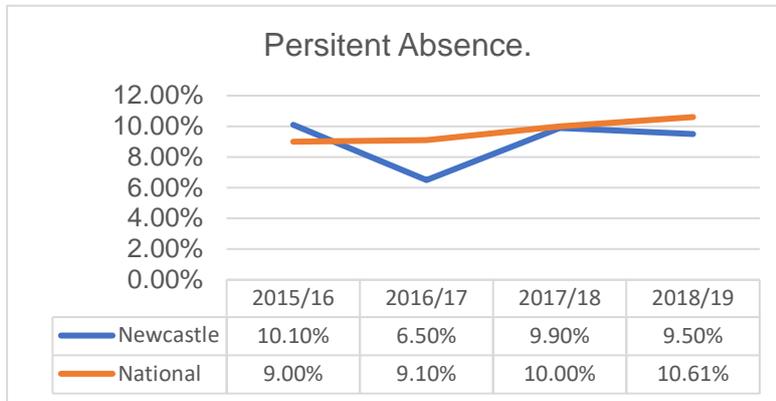


## LAC Attendance and Exclusion



**Newcastle LAC absence rates from school (4.4%) remain below the national levels (4.5%).**

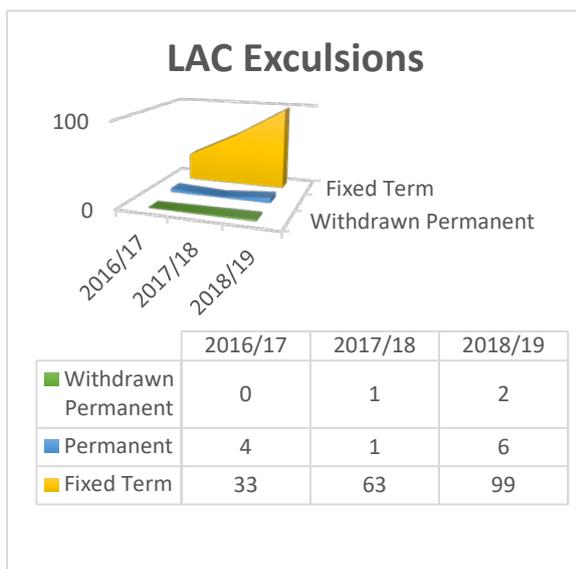
(LAIT)



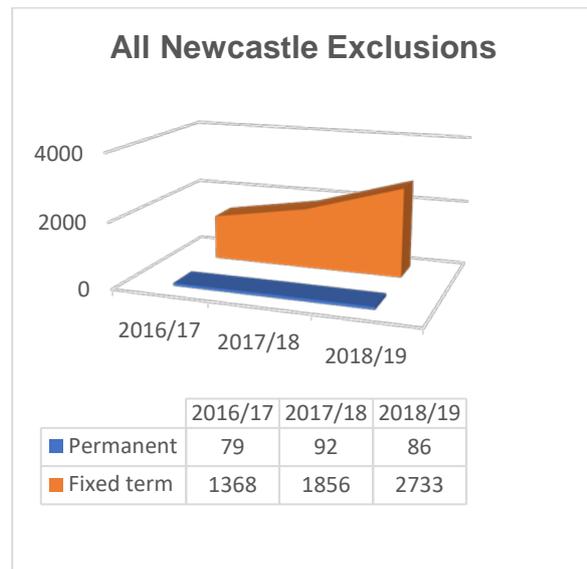
**Newcastle has a persistent absence rate that is 1.11% less than the national comparison.**

(LAIT)

The absence of LAC students compares well with national comparisons and against the 6.6% absence rate of all Newcastle schools. In 2018/19, 137 LAC students attending Newcastle schools had an attendance of above 98%.

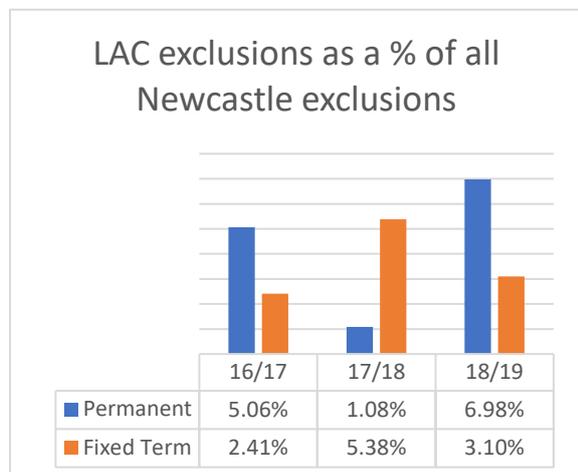


(Capita One)



(Capita One)

The rates of exclusions have been a cause for concern for all Newcastle students rising over a three-year trend. There were six permanent exclusions in 2018/19 which coincided with a drop in fixed term exclusions when taken as a percentage of all fixed term exclusions in Newcastle.



This an area of concern that will be addressed with the earlier intervention with schools using tailored individual curriculum packages that with focus upon the social, emotional and mental health needs of the students. Provision will be made to identify gaps in learning created by poor attendance and historic non engagement in school. The virtual school will use targeted interventions where pupil premium plus is unable to provide the full level of support that is required.

(Capita One)

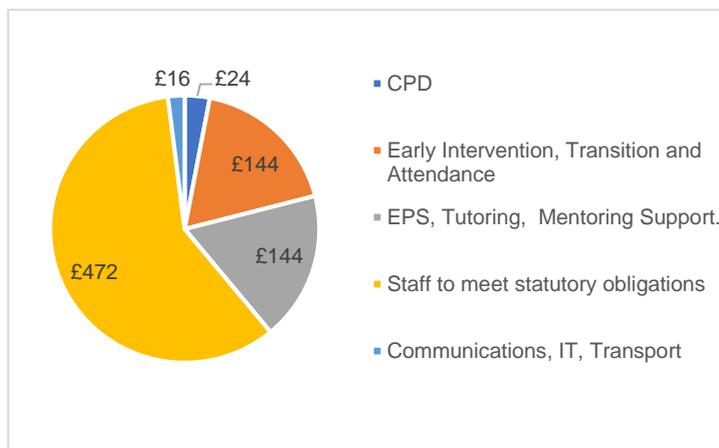
## Personal Education Plans and Pupil Premium Plus.

The statutory PEP is a dynamic document that sets out clear targets for the student and actions for schools, social workers and carers. Once an initial assessment has been made the first PEP will be completed in three months prior to the second LAC review. The PEP is reviewed every six months following entry into care or following a change of residential or school placement. Each PEP is held on a central data base and can be assessed for a red, amber, or green rating against attendance, attainment and exclusions.

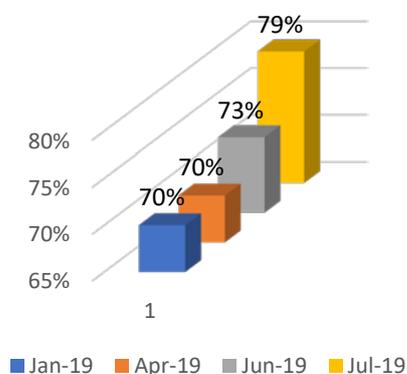
The Virtual School retains £800 of the £2300 pupil Premium Plus. This rate varies nationally and is set locally through the Schools Forum.

In Newcastle the communication and co-ordination of the PEP process is the responsibility of the Education Achievement Worker who ensures that the process undertaken on schedule, with an appropriate level of challenge to all parties.

In 2018/19, £511,498 was distributed to support Personal Education Plans.



PEP Completion Rate  
2018/19



The rate of PEP completion rose from April onwards due to increased staff efficiency. The rise from 70% to 79% plans completed is equivalent to 77 extra plans written. In September 2019 the PEP process will undergo revision and be connected to the Capita One data base. It is anticipated that this will assist in a continued rise in the completion rate.

PEPs are used to track the spending of pupil premium plus both for individual and collective spending. The pupil premium pause policy will be revised next year to reflect this.

## Priorities and Developments: 2019/20

- Increase and sustain PEP completion rates to above 96%.
- Review staffing capacity and introduce additional specialism to the role of the Education Achievement Worker ie, SEN, mental health and well-being. Use increased capacity within the Virtual School to attend LAC reviews and care team meetings on a regular basis to ensure a higher quality of support.
- Challenge and support schools to reduce exclusions and persistent absence, using early intervention and solution focused approaches.
- Ensure that all LAC students are accessing appropriate learning opportunities that meet their individual circumstances and needs.
- Carry out LAC audit of schools in terms of attendance, attainment and pastoral support to assist in matching school to the needs of the child.
- Develop joint working with Childrens Social Care through attendance at Care/Resource Panel and regular communication with senior managers.
- Continued support for academic progress in all age groups, which is above national comparisons on a three-year trend.
- Extend support for Previously Looked after Children through PLAC grant.