



Virtual School Annual Report 2022/23

‘Striving for Success’

Owner:	Cherie Sears, Virtual School Headteacher
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Summary:

This annual report summarises activity of the virtual school for the last academic year including:

- The performance of the Virtual School in respect of Key Performance Indicators.
- The achievements and attainment of children looked after by Slough.
- Other Services offered by Slough Virtual School.
- Next steps for Virtual School.

Happy, Safe & Loved, Thriving

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Executive Summary

We are excited to share the Slough Children First Virtual School summary for the 2022-2023 academic year. We have named our report 'Striving for Success', as this year has seen significant achievements for our young people. However, we remind ourselves that we will never be satisfied and must continue to "Strive for Success". There are so many things to celebrate and here are just some of the highlights. You can read more throughout the report and also, you're welcome to make contact, ask questions and let us know what you think. We're your service after all!

Highlights of 2022/23

- We're proud to share that PEP (Personal Education Plan) completion is **100%** with every young person looked after in education having a PEP every term
- We are proud to share we have reviewed **100%** of EHCPs (Education, Health & Care Plans) for children looked after and make sure that your Annual Review happens in a timely manner
- **>95%** of our Children Looked After attend Good or Outstanding schools
- With individual transition plans in place, **100%** of our Children Looked After successfully transitioned from Primary to Secondary School
- Your **results were phenomenal**, especially the GCSE outcomes of our Children Looked After, which exceeded your national and regional peers
- **100%** of all Key Stage 5 young people that live in Slough received support through 'September Guarantee' with <95% having an agreed destination
- We currently support **14 care experienced young people to attend university** at Degree or Masters level with bursaries, information, advice and guidance, ensuring you get the very best out of your time and know where to go for support
- We have developed a **Profile on a Page** which we share with all young people new to care so that you know who your advocate is and how to reach them
- We are looking again at our PEP documents to ensure that the paperwork talks 'to you' not 'about you' as part of the **PEP Meeting**
- We are working with you to ensure that **your voice is heard** and that our questions are relevant and accessible to you when it comes to your review.
- We continue to deliver a **comprehensive training package** that gives the team around any 'child known to Social Care' the training and support required to ensure all our young people are afforded the best possible educational opportunities, as well as putting in place support to help professionals manage when education is a challenge.
- We are considering your needs carefully and assigning you to the most appropriate **Education Champion** to ensure that transition from one day to the next, year to the next and school to the next is as successful as it can possibly be
- We work closely with our Slough Borough Council colleagues to ensure that Slough Children First has a **Virtual School representative on all panels** that address the education of children in the area to ensure that you are appropriately represented
- And most importantly, we strive to ensure **your voice is front and centre** when considering the best possible education, giving you opportunities to be part of the decision making and feedback on what is going well and what needs improving.

There is so much to celebrate so if you can, please take the time to read on and hear about how Virtual School supports you, and other Slough young people, to be successful in education in more detail.

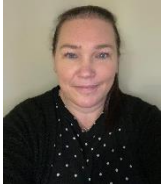
Welcome to the Slough Virtual School 2022/23 Annual Report

We're really excited to celebrate another great year for our young people and share with you some of the highlights and plans for Slough Virtual School moving forward.



First of all, I let me introduce myself, I'm Cherie and I am your Virtual School Head. I am proud to lead the Slough Virtual School team that supports you on your education adventure. We have a number of 'jobs to do' as a Virtual School and different to other virtual schools, as well as our 'Children Looked After' Team, we also have the Post 16 Education, Employment & Training Team and our SiaSS (Safer in a Slough School) Team supporting the education for all young people with a Social Worker.

Below are some snaps of your team and the Team Leads so you can put a face to the name. At the back of the report you will find all our contact details, as we are keen to ensure you are able to make contact with people that support you. There is also a glossary to help with some of the acronyms that you may find throughout the document.



Danielle
Secondary
Lead



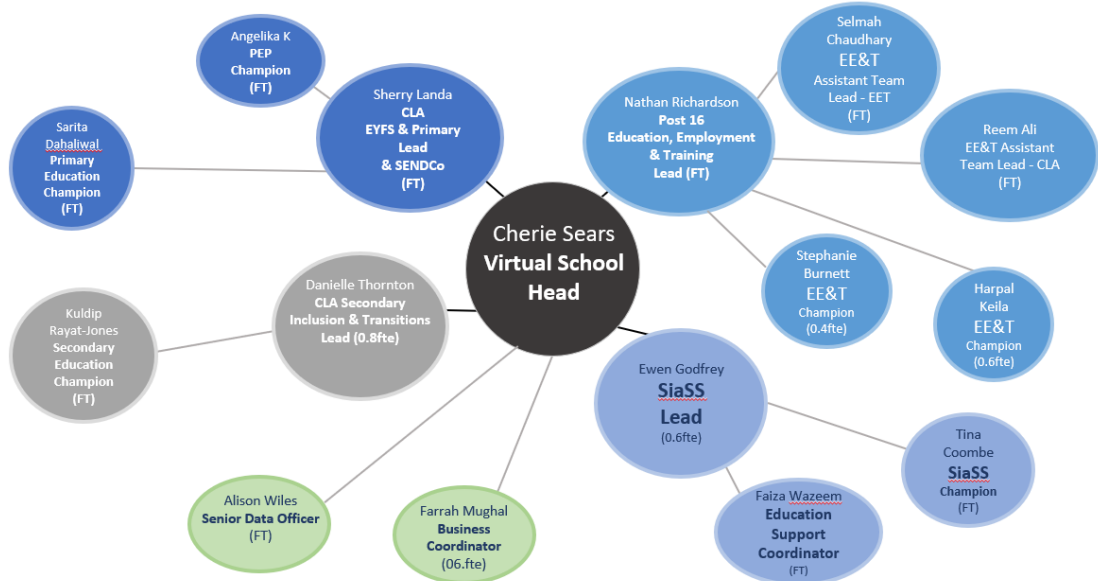
Sherry
EYFS &
Primary Lead



Ewen
SiaSS
Lead



Nathan
Post 16
EE&T Lead



<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My year 11 was tough, I had a lot going on and I wasn't in a place to tackle my exams. Things didn't work out. I'm not sure what to do now. 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your Education Champion worked with you to understand what you're interested in, how you like to learn and what you think your future holds. We took you to visit colleges and gave you the information you needed to decide your next steps. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You chose your college and we supported your application. You have started studying catering and also working with the college to retake your GCSE Maths and English. You're settled, happy and on track for great things. We're looking forward to tasting the results!
<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am setting in to my new school and I'm making more friends. I think I'd like to learn to play chess, can you help? 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We think chess is a great way to make friends and learn skills in patience, strategy and of course we'd love to help so we bought you a chess and backgammon set. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are becoming a bit of a chess champion and sharing your skills with friends in class. Well done! 
<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm not cut out for A'Levels, I don't think it's something I want to do. What else is there? 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We worked with you, your Carer, Social Worker and school to look at different pathways and found a business apprenticeship. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are excelling at your apprenticeship and the business can't speak more highly of you. You still have PEPs to focus on your college work and these have been resoundingly positive.
<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to go back to school but I've missed so much and I'm worried I won't be able to catch up. 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We worked with your new school to give you a gentle return to learning and arranged for a tutor to work with you, at home, to support and underpin the work from school. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You successfully returned to school and with a lot of hard work by you, you've caught up and are on track to reach your predicted grades.
<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't find change very easy and I'm worried about starting a new class with my new teacher. 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We talked to you and your carer about things you enjoyed and discovered that you were going on holiday over the summer break on a ferry. We bought a 'build your own' Ferry kit that your new teacher gifted to you before the holidays. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You were really pleased to receive the gift from your new teacher and agreed to bring your Ferry back in the new term and tell her all about your holiday. You've settled in to the new class and have even given a 'Show & Tell'.

<p>You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't like doing PEPs on Teams, I can't really hear and I don't get to see you. 	<p>We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We had to move PEPs online when we were experiencing Covid and schools were not accepting visitors. However, we have listened and PEPs will all be face to face by the end of the next academic year 	<p>What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are happy to see your advocate at school and be part of the decision making. Your views are sought on the time of the PEP and you are happy to attend and make important decisions about your education.
<p>You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm worried I am not going to get in to university as I'm still struggling to pass my Maths GCSE, I just don't get it. 	<p>We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We spoke to your 6th form and put them in touch with a Maths Tutor. Between them and with your input, they worked out a support plan to get you through your exam. 	<p>What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have now passed your maths exam and have submitted your UCAS form to study Nursing. We're super proud of you and will be with you every step of the way!
<p>You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I really love art but I don't have any stuff, can you help? 	<p>We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We funded a selection of art materials and spoke to your school about having access to art equipment too. 	<p>What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You've produced some amazing art works some of which we're proud to share in this report and also are displayed in our offices.
<p>You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I really miss my old friends and I am struggling to make new ones in my new school. 	<p>We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We gave your school some money for you to choose some playground equipment for your class so that other children that are interested in the same will be able to share with you and from that build friendships. 	<p>What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although it's still early days, you are starting to settle in and make new friends. You are also a very good footballer and we hope to hear about your successes in the team!
<p>You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I really want to get better at my English but I don't want a tutor. Can you help? 	<p>We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We talked to you about how you learn best and arranged for you to have a tablet to access learning videos and sourced the accompanying books. 	<p>What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are enjoying this style of learning and we are starting to see an improvement in your English. We have also shared this with school as a preferred learning style.

<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we talked about your upcoming planned move you said you'd like a 'house with a swimming pool'. 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we were considering your new school we looked to ensure that they accessed swimming lessons. • We made sure you were able to visit and see for yourself the facilities as well as meet with classmates. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have settled in really well and have already started swimming with the school. You have made some good friends and your teachers tell us that all is going really well for you. Well done!
<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I need equipment to do my music production practical and coursework. 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We supplied you with a laptop and specialist software to support your course. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You're able to complete your coursework and also use the laptop to support your other learning. You're producing some amazing sounds and we can't wait to see where this course takes you!
<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I really love reading and especially the 'Storey Treehouse' books. 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We made sure that we sent you a special parcel in the post with the newest of the books and also sent you other books through our literacy programme 'Parcel in the Post'. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your carer tells us you are really enjoying reading and can't wait to receive more books. We will always explore your interests with you and make sure the books we send stretch your imagination even further!
<p style="text-align: center;">You said</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I got my A'Level results and missed my one of my grades. I can't now join my chosen university course. 	<p style="text-align: center;">We did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We spoke to your school and asked for support in retaking your year. We also wrote to your University to consider a further application next year. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What happens next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your school welcomed you back and continue to support you to achieve the grades required for your university and they, in turn, are happy to receive a further application.



Collaborations – How are we supporting others to support you?

It's important that we work closely with those that support your learning to ensure you have access to the best possible educational opportunities. This doesn't just mean working with your teachers, although that's really important too, we also work with lots of other people to ensure education is high on their agenda, for example...

Education Training for Carers

We are working with our Fostering Agency to develop a training package for carers so that they are able to confidently advocate on your behalf. They will have the opportunity to learn about:

- Supporting Learning at Home
- Understanding Assessment
- Admissions and Attendance
- Understanding Special Educational Needs and Seeking Support
- How to support if things get tricky – Suspensions & Exclusions

Education Training for Social Workers

Every month your Virtual School offers bite sized Education Training for your Social Workers. Very similar to that for Carers but smaller, focussed training opportunities to fit in with their working day. This covers the subjects above as well as things like Admissions, Exclusions, PEPs and Fair Access. Over the last year we have also had specialist training from mental health services and our local Alternative Provisions and covered subjects such as Mental Health, 'Language that Cares' and Emotionally Based School Refusal. These will be repeated this coming year to ensure your Social Workers have the best possible knowledge to allow them to support your learning.

As well as the training, we also offer one to one assistance to any Social Worker who has education questions and we make sure they're fully supported if they need to advocate on your behalf.

Training for Teachers and Education Leaders

This is massively important! We want to make sure that your school allows you to experience the best possible education and ensure that any barriers to your learning are removed. We offer an all day training event to all the Designated Teachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads, this includes training on things like:

- Setting Appropriate Targets and Making the best of the PEP
- Understanding the impact of Trauma on Learning
- Avoiding Conflict
- Statutory Responsibilities in relation to Children with a Social Worker
- Supporting Transition
- Improving and maintaining Attendance

As well as this, we offer bespoke training to schools who request it or when things aren't going as well as we would like. We will make personal visits, support extra interventions and fund specific training to ensure that a young person's specific needs can be met (for example, specialist diagnosis training such as Autism). Sometimes things go wrong and schools may need extra support to meet your needs, Virtual School offer training and support either directly, or via other services to sure the school can give you the best opportunity to remain included.

Other training

We know that it can be tricky navigating education and the other things going on in your life. We also know that there are other people involved in decision making. Virtual School ensure that all people involved in your pathway understand the importance of your education, this includes working with people in commissioning and visiting tutors ensuring that whilst we make sure we make best use of public funds, we also don't compromise on quality. We also make sure we collaborate with Healthcare and that we are understanding of each other's priorities whilst maintaining the best possible support for you.

How we're ensuring a quality service



It's really important that we continue to take a good look at our service and make sure all our young people have access to the best possible opportunities. As you know, we ensure that every young person looked after in statutory education can review their education every term, this is called a PEP (Personal Education Plan).



As part of our practice, we routinely quality assure your PEPs to ensure they are timely, comprehensive and the Targets are SMART. We also quality assure the content completed by others (for example your School and Social Worker) to make sure the information is up to date, relevant and fit for purpose. We feedback to all parties and report on our PEP completions and where necessary, offer additional training to ensure quality of service.

In this last academic year 2022-23 we're really proud to say our PEP returns are as follows:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
100%	100%	100%

On a rare occasion your PEP may be delayed for issues outside of our control. However, in all these cases, it is completed as soon thereafter as is possible and always within the same term.

We aim to ensure every young person looked after has a PEP for every academic term, even if they are not in formal education. On these occasions we have completed what we call an 'informal' PEP. The Informal PEP has just as much value as our academic PEP, but these focus more on how we're supporting you to get back into education and what we're doing in the meantime. We also use informal PEPs if we check in on your progress in between formal PEPs. This just ensures everyone has a clear idea of what your plan is and what we can do to help.

Supporting you in Education

Although we have a statutory obligation to review your education termly, our service does not stop there. We know that things change and that you may need support outside of the PEP timetable. This is not an issue. Each young person Looked After has their own highly qualified Education Champion and they will be keeping an eye on your education throughout the year. So, if you're having a challenge and you need their help, they are there for you. You



Hi, I'm Cherie

I'm the Virtual School Headteacher. It's a funny name because although I'm a teacher, my role isn't in the classroom. I'm here to make sure you get the very best educational opportunities, ensure your voice is heard and support you to make the best choices about your future career. You have someone who helps you with education at your PEP Meeting and my job is to support them too. So, if there's ever anything I can help you with, please contact me.

- My favourite things to do are to go to the beach for a paddle and snuggle with my dog, Kipper.
- My favourite food is cheesy mashed potato.
- My favourite music is Take That (yes, I know, but I'm old!).
- And my party trick is that I can do the splits!

You can contact me or on the telephone 07710 153662 or by email cherie.sears@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

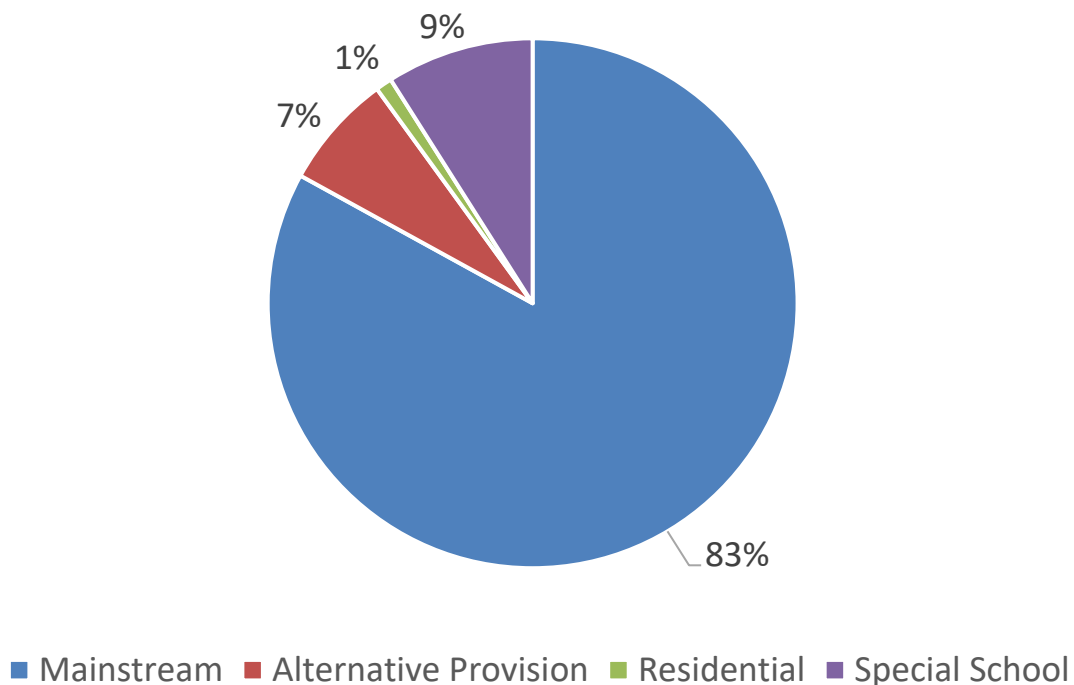
I'm really proud to be part of your education journey and can't wait to hear all about your progress!

will meet your advocate at your PEP meeting, but you can always contact them through your Carer, Social Worker or Designated Teacher at any other time.

Each of our advocates also have a 'profile on a page' that gives you their contact information and a little bit of insight into who they are. Please ask if you haven't seen one, we're always happy to hand them out.

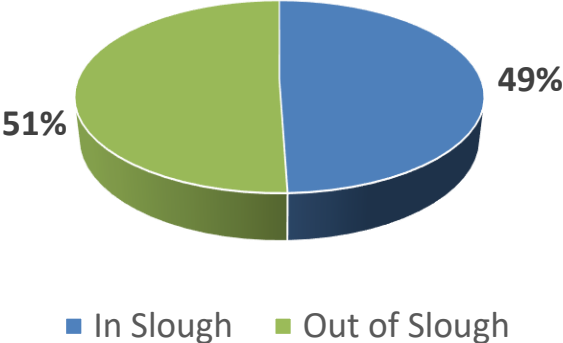
What type of Schools do Slough Children Looked After attend?

Slough Virtual School are keen to ensure that you have education that meets your particular needs. We always look to place you in a school that can help bring out the best in you and of course, we will listen to you about your thoughts and feelings. The diagram below shows what type of schools our young people attend.



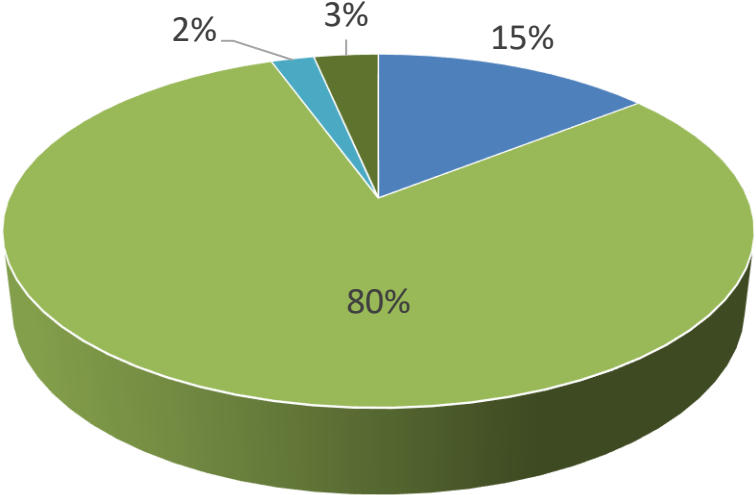
How many are of you are educated outside of Slough?

Some of you are able to remain in Slough when you come into care and others are outside of the area. Wherever you live, we will always ensure we find the best possible education for you.



How good are your schools?

It’s really important that you have a good quality of education and we work hard to ensure that wherever you are educated, in whatever type of school, the curriculum meets your needs and you are afforded the best opportunities to succeed. One of our measures is your school’s overall Ofsted grading. At the time of writing, >95% of you are in schools or colleges graded good or outstanding and none are considered inadequate.

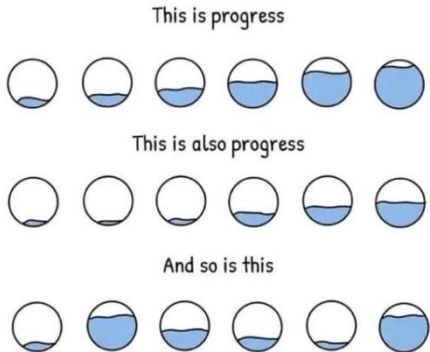


- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires Improvement
- Inadequate
- Awaiting formal inspection

You might be attending a school which is currently graded ‘Requires Improvement’ or ‘Yet to be Inspected’. Be assured that we will only consider a change of school if we feel this is in your best interests and we will always discuss this with you first. We have a very close relationship with all our schools but especially these ones. We want to ensure that despite any Ofsted inspection outcomes, your outcomes are not impacted. We will sometimes visit more regularly, hold additional PEP Meetings, check in with other adults working with you and generally just keep a close eye. Just because a school has a judgement, does not necessarily mean that judgement will have a direct impact on your learning. If it does, we will always act to make sure you are not affected.

Be assured we don't rely solely on Ofsted gradings, as this is only a snapshot of the time. The Virtual School team continually monitor and review the quality of your education and know that we will always act to ensure you have the best possible education for you and challenge when things are not quite right. We are incredibly lucky to have such great schools both locally and nationally and supporting you isn't just our number one priority, it's theirs too.

How you're doing – Statutory Assessments and Next Steps



Your Virtual School constantly monitors your progress through the PEP. Your progress is a really important indicator as to how you are getting on and can also tell us if things aren't quite right.

At Slough Children First we recognise that things going on outside of school can impact how things are at school and that's why we work hard with the key adults in your life to ensure that there is enough support available in school when things are a challenge.

As well as the Virtual School monitoring your progress, the government set out statutory testing throughout your education. On the next few pages you will see how our young people got on at each stage of statutory testing:

EYFS and Primary Statutory Data

Every school must share information about all statutory tests. The Government requires children in EYFS and Primary to have the following information collected:

End of EYFS (end of Reception year) profile data - how you did in the 17 strands of learning and whether you achieved a "Good Level of Development" (GLD)

Year 1 Phonics screening – you took a test asking you to read real and made-up words. This is scored out of 40 and the pass mark is 32.

Year 2 Phonics resit- this is the same as the above except this year, Year 2s had to take this in December as you didn't take it last June and then do it again in June if you scored less than 32 the first-time round.

Year 2 SATs - these are tasks you did in class as part of your normal work, during May and June. Your teacher scored your Reading and Maths and then assessed your Writing over the year. 100 or more in Reading and Maths means you are at expected levels, under 100 you are Working Towards

Year 4 Times tables test – this is a test on the computer where you had 6 seconds to recall your tables and answer the question. This is scored out of 25.



Year 6 SATs – these are a variety of tests you sat in May. We asked for your Reading, SPAG and Maths scores. 100 or more means you are at expected levels, under 100 you are Working Towards

We know Covid impacted on many of you and your friends but not (yet) quite how much. This year’s “results” will give us ideas as to how we can further help you to move onwards and upwards.

What we know about this year’s EYFS & Primary results in Slough

Year/ Assessment	Number of CYP in cohort	Number of Reporting CYP (in care more than 1 year)	Number of exempted CYP	Number of “passes”	Number of Working Towards	So what?
Year 4 Times tables	8	4	1 (CME)	No threshold. 1x 6/25 (EHCP) 3x 20 – 25; 1x CME; 3x 18 – 25		
Year 2 SATs	7	4	3 (1x EHCP; 1x SENA; 1x CME)	Reading 1 Writing 0 Maths 2 (1x SENa)	Reading 3 (2 inc. 1x EHCP; 1x SENA) Writing 4 (2 inc. 1x EHCP; 2 inc 1x SENA) Maths 2 (1x EHCP)	Child of most concern is reporting with no EHCP or SENA. VS has funded an educational psychology report for this child and a plan is now in place to support more effectively.
Year 2 Phonics (“re- sit” of Year 1)	4	2	1 (CME)	2 (1 and 1)	1 x SENA	Child did increase score from Y1 but has SENa awaiting EHCP; provision already adapted.

Year 1 Phonics	9	6	3 (2 in transition, not in school - 1 x EHCP; 1; 1x CME)	4 (1x EHCP; 3)	2	1 child moving schools over summer; other child moving to adoption over summer having missed much of YR – both expected to pass in Y2
Reception EYFS GLD	9	7	3 (2x EHCP not on EYFS curriculum; 1x CME)	4 (3; 1**)	2	Both already have identified additional needs with support in place. Monitor transition into Y1 and review support (SENA if needed)

** second period of care

Green = reporting

Black = non-reporting

Key Stage 4 – GCSE Outcomes



The DfE has released the provisional markers for Progress 8 which has allowed us to compile initial data analysis on the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 data for our 202/23 GCSE cohort. 'Progress 8' and 'Attainment 8' are national measures of progress. There are more details of these in the appendices and glossary at the back of this document.

Our statutory requirement is to report on all children looked after that have been looked after for more than 12 months on the date of the first exam, this gave us a cohort for 2023. This is known as the reportable cohort.

We celebrate that you, our cohort, is diverse and has many positive characteristics. However, not everyone finds education easy and some of you have challenges that we try our very best to support with. We know you try the best you can given the circumstances you can sometimes find yourself in, for example, some of you were new to care and others may have experienced mental health crisis or other challenges in your life. Sometimes things have changed significantly since you took your SATs, you may not have been in school for some time or perhaps needed the support of an EHCP and some of you may be new to the country. As we know, these factors can have a significant impact on such a small cohort. However, Slough Children Looked After outcomes still exceeded both the national and regional trends by an impressive distance and we are so proud of you all!

You will find a comprehensive breakdown of your results in the appendices at the back of this documents but below you will find the headlines.

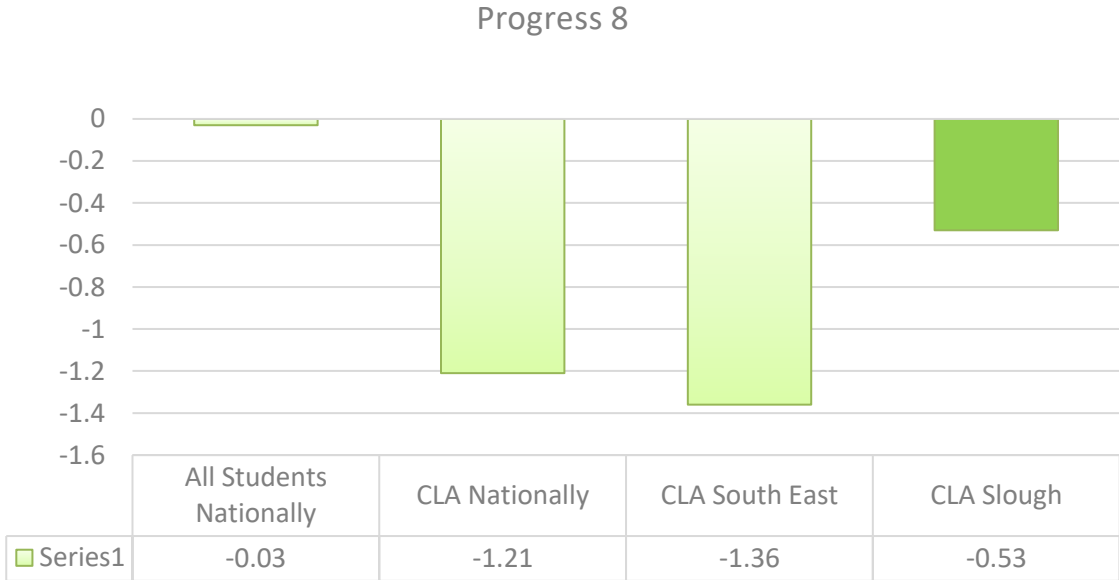
The provisional data (I have to put a caveat on the measurement data until the DfE publish formal CLA yard sticks in March 2024) showing the developing combined scores for GCSEs are as follows:

Provisional Attainment 8 for the reportable Slough cohort is	33.42
Provisional Progress 8 for the reportable Slough cohort is	- 0.53

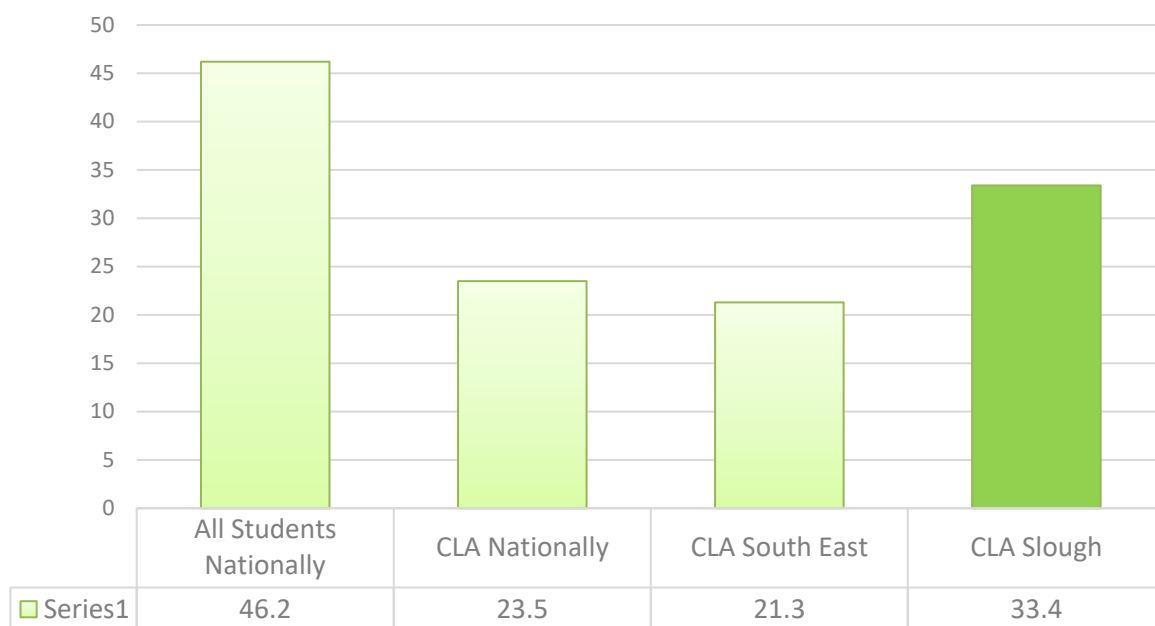
Below is the data from the ‘emerging national trends’ from the NCER. You can find more details in the appendices.

	Cohort	Prog. Cov.	KS2 PAG (mean)*	Overall		
				Avg. At8 Score	Avg. Pr8 Score	Conf. Int.
NCER National (CLA pupils)	4,940	92.0%	-	23.5	-1.21	±0.04
DfE Region - South East (CLA)	750	89.0%	-	21.3	-1.36	±0.11

You will see that the national Progress8 benchmark for CLA is -1.21 and the South East region -1.36, Slough CLA did much better with our outcome of -0.53. You will also note the Attainment 8 scores nationally are 23.5 with South East region 21.3, our young people achieved an average of 33.42*. (*this is emerging data and therefore may be subject to change).



Attainment 8



Key stage 5

The reportable cohort was much increased this year from just under 50 to 70 young people, but the cohort as a whole was our largest ever at 98. This year was diverse in a number of ways. Of 98 young people in this age group, 85% of you had some form of additional needs, including 10% of you holding EHCPs, 50% requiring additional support and a further 44% of you new to the country with English not as your first language (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) UASC. Only 1 of our young people took traditional A Levels this year but others of you have successful apprenticeships and employment.

Of those Key Stage 5 that were in education in 2022/23, 93% either continued or have taken employment.

Our young person that took A'Levels is intending on studying medicine at university and is taking a further year to bolster her results.

Not everyone is ready to remain in education or employment. Of those of you not in education, employment or training (NEET), 1 is currently mid maternity, 1 has recently moved back to the area and is being closely supported to find a local offer, 2 are in mental health crisis but the team are in regular contact, another dropped out of education but the team are working hard with her to find an alternative, and the other 3 have a long history of non-engagement and poor outcomes and we are taking a multiagency approach, alongside their PAs to continue to motivate and support them to find an appropriate pathway.

Know that we will never give up and will always continue to help you find the best possible plan at the best time. Please get in touch.

Our university cohort

Virtual School are keen to continue to support our Care Leavers that remain in education and we are proud to have 14 of you supported on university courses.



4 are on their 3rd year

7 are on their 2nd year

3 are on their 1st year.

There are also 2 of you supported to study at Masters Level and will be ensuring that all our degree level students have a pathway plan that supports further learning if you so wish.

Apprenticeships for Care Leavers

Virtual School is committed to all types of pathways for our young people, including Apprenticeships. In fact, we engage in this not only with external organisations but also within our own Virtual School Team.

Last year we celebrated the completion of our first Care Leaver Apprenticeship programme with that young person going on to get a full time job within the team and now about to embark on a further, Level 4 apprenticeship on her way to her ultimate dream of being a Social Worker. We are so very proud of her!

We have also welcomed a second Care Leaver apprentice to the Virtual School who has settled in like she's always been with us and is absolutely smashing her targets! We have high hopes for her future with Slough Children First.



We are not alone in our Care Leaver Apprenticeship programme and over 2023/24, Slough Children First are looking to employ many more young people, giving them the opportunity to learn and flourish and reinforcing our commitment to our corporate family and 'growing your own!'

If you are interested in an apprenticeship, please speak to your Education Champion or Personal Advisor (PA) for more details.

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)



Many of you have received some sort of extra support either for your academic attainment or to support your emotional health and well-being. This may look like a small group intervention in school, or ELSA (see glossary) or nurture groups. It can also take place outside of school such as tutoring, play therapy or counselling.

Some of you need more support than a school can give you in the budget they get from the Government. If this is the case your school or setting will have applied for something called an EHCP

(Education Health and Care Plan). This is a statutory document which sets out your needs and how your teachers should meet those needs. It includes any medical needs you have and what your social worker's role is in helping you stay safe and achieve. It will include things like physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy where you need support from those services. Once you have one of these plans they are reviewed annually if you are over five and six-monthly if you are under 5. Your views, those of your parents and carers are sought for each review.

In August 2023, 53 of you had an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). This is nearly 25% of our cohort. Nationally, the figure is 4.3% but it's not unusual for the percentage to be higher in Virtual School as we look after young people that have disabilities as well as those in care for other reasons. Between August 2022 and August 2023 3 new plans were issued and we make sure that **100% of EHC plans were reviewed within time scales.**

Having an EHCP does not mean that you necessarily attend a special school. 40% of you are in mainstream education; a further 6% of you are educated in a Resource Base (or a mix of Resource Base and mainstream) and 54% of you attend a specialist provider.

At Virtual School part of our job is to ensure that if you have an EHCP it is up-to-date and reflects your current need and that you are being educated in the best possible place to meet those needs. Sometimes that means you may change schools or education providers. The most important thing for us is that you are happy in school, love to learn and are supported to reach your potential and realise your dreams. Don't forget to talk to your Virtual School champion if you feel you'd like some further advice or guidance.

SiaSS (*Safer in a Slough School*) Supporting Children with a Social Worker

As well as supporting our Children Looked After, Slough Virtual School also supports young people known to Social Care that may have a CIN (Child in Need) or CP (Child Protection) Plan, as well as those known to Early Help. This is a relatively new service that the government is supporting as data was showing that young people with a Social Worker had some of the poorest academic outcomes nationally and it's important that we do something about that.

In Slough we continue to develop a package of support for professionals that makes sure that they secure the best possible education opportunities for all our young people, this may include you. Some of the things we do include:

- Offering training and development to Teachers, Social Workers, and other professionals
- An online and in person support service giving information advice and guidance to those supporting our young people
- Representing Children with a Social Worker at Council meetings such as Fair Access Panel, Children Missing Education, and Keeping Children Safe in Education Panel, CAMHS/MHST and SEND to ensure that any young people known to us are advocated for and any services required from the meetings are managed
- Monitoring the attendance of all children subject to a CIN or CP Plan and offering intervention to schools that have attendance anomalies
- Advocacy and other support for you, your families and other professionals if you find yourselves subject to suspension or exclusion
- Working alongside other services to ensure that when a you are in crisis, we are able to get the support you need without unnecessary delay

This year we introduced a NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training) Champion to support families in most crisis. She has been working with Social Workers and Families to support young people back into education and ensure they have a sustainable pathway. Tina has made a massive difference to a number of young people and her support and persistence has seen much improved attendance to some of our most hard to reach young people.

This service can be accessed by the SiaSS Lead, Ewen Godfrey, through the helpline.

Support for Previously Looked After Children

The Virtual School has a responsibility to support the educational achievement of previously looked after children in Slough. It's important that you are previously looked after, you are open to the best possible educational opportunities. Virtual School carry this out through the provision of advice and information to parents, guardians, schools, social care professionals and professionals.

Previously looked-after children are those who: are no longer looked after by a local authority because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements

order; or were adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales. The provision is open to children from the point at which they become eligible for free early education (which is currently the start of the term following a child’s second birthday) and concludes when s/he has completed the compulsory years of education (end of Yr11).

The service has been invaluable to both professionals and families alike, offering great advocacy and ensuring that you are not unfairly disadvantaged. This year alone we have represented families needing support with admissions, SEND and sadly, sometimes even exclusions. We will always help to ensure your rights are preserved and you can access education without judgement.

You can access this service through our SiaSS Team Lead, Ewen Godfrey. His details are available at the end of this document.

The Post 16 Education, Employment & Training Team

The Post 16 Education, Employment & Training team support our Children Looked After and Care Leavers with information, advice, support and guidance, regardless of their location, that helps them navigate next steps in education and future careers.

The team ensure all of you aged between 16-18 continue to have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) even if you are not in traditional education and they seek out opportunities for those that may have disengaged. They work with Social Workers, PAs and other professionals to help support the Pathway to adulthood.

As well as their support of Children Looked After and Care Leavers, the team also have the statutory responsibility of reporting on destinations of **all** young people living in Slough moving through key stage 5 (age 16-18yrs), this is called the ‘September Guarantee’. The ‘September Guarantee’ is a guarantee of an offer, made by the end of September and monitored throughout the academic year, of an appropriate place in post-16 education or training for every young person completing compulsory education.

Ensuring that every young person in Slough has an offer of a place to progress onto is particularly important as it helps you make a seamless transition into post-16 learning or employment with training. The September Guarantee is an offer of a place in one of the following:

- A school sixth form
- A college of further education
- Employment with training to at least level 2
- An apprenticeship

The end of academic year 2022/23 NEET & Not known figures were published and are:

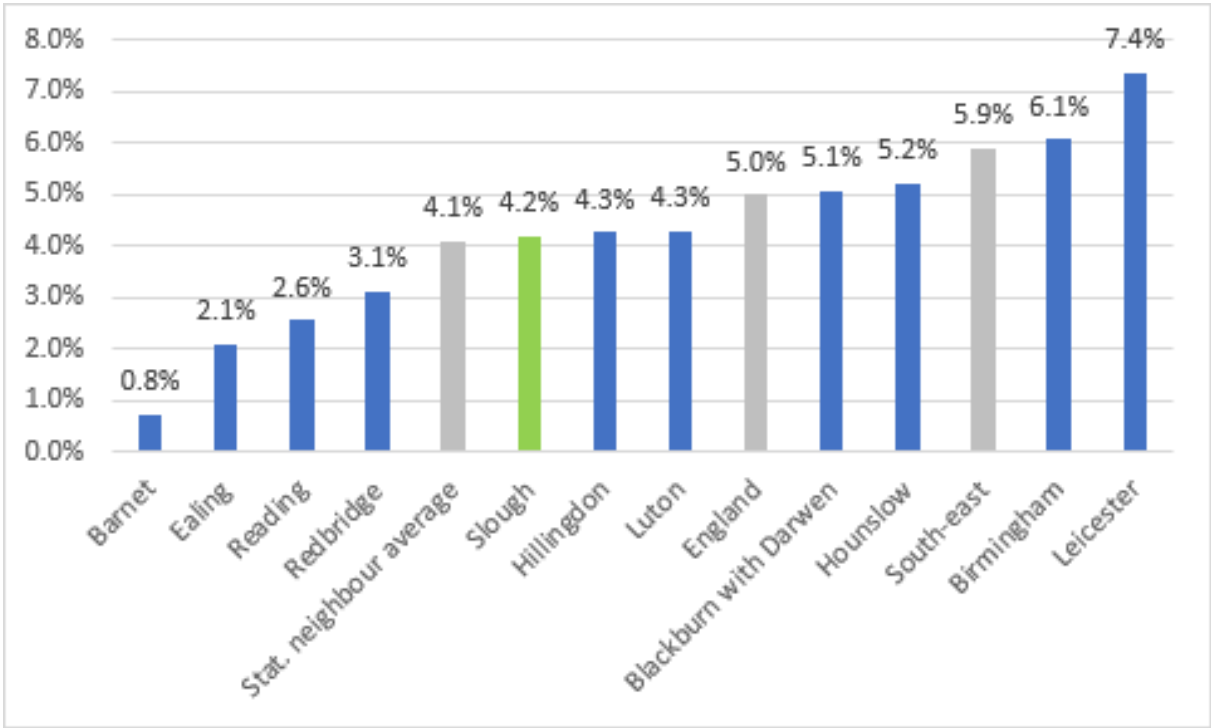
	Slough	South East	England
NEET	3.4%	2.8%	3.2%
Not known	0.8%	3.1%	1.8%
NEET + Not known	4.2%	5.9%	5.0%

The ‘Not Known’ figure is a very important part of the data. These are the young people we have yet to be able to locate, this may be because they have moved out of area.

Our team not only track our young people by phone and letter, but also visit face to face to ensure no one is missed. You will note our 'Not Known' figure is much lower than those locally or nationally, as we are tireless in our pursuit of those young people.

Our NEET figures are higher than average, but there are some local issues that all young people in Slough face, including a limited range in the local offer for Key Stage 5. Nearing the end of the academic year colleges are reluctant to take new students, meaning they effectively become NEET until the September and we must also recognise in this number, some that either are unable to engage in Education, Employment or Training at this time, or perhaps choose not to. Again, the team work tirelessly to engage and encourage you, looking for packages outside of the norm and working intensively in one to one sessions building CVs and seeking opportunities for you.

- NEET rate for year 12 and 13 = **3.43% (152 YPs)**.
- Not Known rate for year 12 and 13 = **0.79% (35 YPs)**.
- Combined year 12 and 13 NEET and Not Known rate = **4.22% (187 YPs)**.

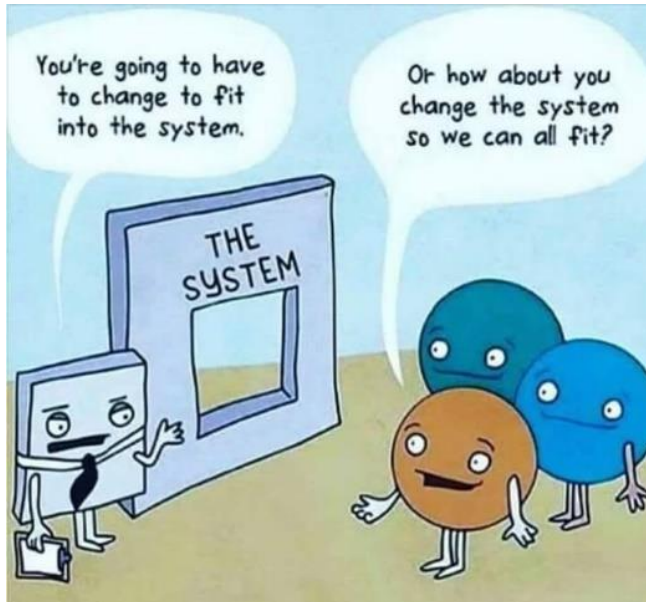


Slough is 69th out of 151 LA's which is near the top of the third quintile and comfortably level with our statistical neighbours.

You can reach our Post 16 Team through their lead, Nathan Richardson, who's details are available at the end of this report.

Suspensions and Exclusions

Sadly, sometimes things don't always turn out right and whilst we know you try your best, sometimes there is a blip that means you experience a suspension or exclusion. When this happens we are here to support you, not just for the suspension, but also after to avoid any reoccurrence.



We are pleased to say that **there have been no permanent exclusions this year**. However, we have experienced a number of suspensions. We investigate each fully and work with both the professionals and young people to minimise any repeat. However, some of you experience crisis, especially during periods of change, such as new term, new class, new teacher and perhaps new home or social worker, all of which can have an impact on how we are feeling and our behaviour.

We know that behaviour can be a tool for communication and whilst it's never favourable to have a suspension, it can be the evidence we need to consider what's going on for you and if necessary, change things or engage more support. For example, it may indicate to us that the school you are in isn't quite the right fit for you or that you need some further help or perhaps it's time for an EHCP.

Below are our suspension figures for this academic year. You will notice some trends, but most importantly, that **generally, suspensions show signs of reducing**.

Autumn Term 2022	No Days	No Children	EHCP?
Primary	22	5	4
Secondary	22.5	6	2

Spring Term 2023	No Days	No Children	EHCP?
Primary	3 ↓	3 ↓	3 ↓
Secondary	15 ↓	3 ↓	2 =

Summer 2023	No Days	No Children	EHCP?
Primary	1.5 ↓	2 ↓	2 ↓
Secondary	24 ↑	4 ↑	1 ↓

The **Autumn** Term can be tricky for some of you, particularly if you are changing school, moving to college or even settling into a new class. We welcomed a number of new young people at the beginning of the year and particularly in primary, those young people also faced school moves. This can be overwhelming, especially for those with additional needs, but you can see by Spring, things start to settle.

Spring suspensions were much reduced, but you will see that in the **Summer**, a couple of our young people in secondary were in crisis. 20 of the 24 days can be attributed to 2 young people. One young person was transitioning from mainstream to a provision better able to manage their needs and the other in the middle of an EHCP for SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) and has since found a provision to better meet her needs.

We never take suspensions lightly, but know that they are all investigated, scrutinised for fairness, challenged if necessary and plans are put in place to avoid any repeat.

If you'd like more information or to discuss a suspension you may have experienced, you can find these either in your PEP or you can ask your Virtual School champion.

Celebrating you...

On to more positive things and as always, you give us so much to celebrate. We are, of course, really proud of your academic achievements but our young people have so many other talents and things to be proud of from phenomenal horse riding skills to sports, photography and arts.

We have heard about P who made 'player of the year' in their rugby team and is going from strength to strength.

T is loving playing chess and encouraging others to do so. He set up a chess club at school and has made lots of new friends!



A is really enjoying her photography and hopes to become a professional photographer. Just take a look at her work, she's amazing!



M's horse riding is her most favourite thing to do and it's not just her favourite hobby, she's also competing. We're really enjoying hearing all about her competitions and achievements, well done M!

There are so many stories to share and we'd love to hear yours. Let your education champion know if you've got something to share. We'd love to celebrate with you.

Other great things going on in Virtual School

We wanted to let you know what other great things have been going on in Virtual School for all our young people.

Whilst we are keen to ensure you have access to traditional education pathways, we also believe that education can come in a variety of ways and there are many learning opportunities that come from other experiences. With that in mind, here's some of the other things that Virtual School is supporting you.

Book Parcels



Each of our young people looked after in Primary phase receive specially selected books to support both their learning and interests outside of school. Those of you in our secondary phase are given the option to receive Book Tokens that give the independence to purchase materials that ignite your reading passion as well as funding additional learning materials through school to support your curriculum, such as GCSE revision books. Virtual School keen to support



reading for pleasure and encourage all our young people to engage. Would you like to know more? Please contact Sherry Landa, our Literacy Lead at Virtual School. You'll find her details on the contact page.

Activities packages

When you tell us about your interests, where we can, we like to support and encourage that learning. For example, Virtual School has sent out Art packages for a number of young people as well as kit for other areas of interest such as engineering and sports.



We have also supported schools to purchase specific interest toys to share with our young people when they are engaging in one to one or planned interventions. We have funded



equipment that allows our young people to be successful during break times and gives you opportunities to build and maintain positive relationships. We look to engage you in other activities that support learning and help express emotions such as music. Virtual School always try to be creative in encouraging learning and are keen to hear of ideas to support positive engagement. Speak to your Education Champion if you'd like to know more.

Transitions and new beginnings



Change can be tricky and we want to ensure all our young people have the best possible endings and new beginnings. With that in mind, when you reach an important transition, such as leaving primary school, we can support you with simple things like memory books where they can collect contact details and share memories of great times. We've offered disposable cameras to catch those lasting memories and support funding their final transition trip.

As well as happy endings, there's also new beginnings and for some, this can be tricky. We have supported our you with



equipment and stationery, laptops and books, as well as sending cards of encouragement and regular check ins with your education champion.



Aspirational adventures



In May we were invited to visit Reading university with some of our young people as part of a 'raising aspirations' collaboration. You got to explore different departments, experience campus life, understand what it takes to follow university dreams and get stuck into some phenomenal experiences in science, humanities and lots of other subjects.

You had a great time and we plan to do many more higher education visits in the coming year.

Aspirations aren't exclusively for our teenagers. We have been working with some of our primary young people who are interested in Grammar School. You have had the opportunity to visit local Grammar Schools and we're supporting some of you with tuition. Each of you have an individual plan as part of your PEP and we will continue to support you wherever your results take you.



Kidzania!

We were lucky enough to secure sponsorship with the Hyundai 'Great British School Trip' to take a number of our primary young people on a very special adventure.



Kidzania is a huge educational entertainment complex in the heart of London, designed to look like a town, where children are in charge. You had the opportunity to work in different job roles, acting out adult job role fantasies and finding out what jobs you are best suited to. Whilst getting paid Kidzos, the currency in KidZania, which can then be spent at the KidZania shops throughout the complex.

You had a phenomenal time, changing tyres with the formula 1 team, landing planes with British Airways, running a busy supermarket and playing at being a Paramedic, the experiences were endless and it really set you thinking about your future. It's definitely a trip we'll be considering again, thanks Hyundai!

Slough Celebration Event

We hosted our annual Celebration Event and what a great day we all had! The event took place in May 2023 at Slough and Eton School here in Slough.



There was masses to do and see. The activities included arts, dance, sports, face painting, a petting farm, great food and so much more.



You came in your masses and we had the opportunity to celebrate your successes with families and the team at our special awards ceremony.



The event was very much enjoyed and we can't wait to welcome you back again next year!



Virtual School Plans for the Future



We always keen to celebrate the great outcomes you, our young people, have achieved, but we are also looking to the future. Across the Virtual Team we have professionals with the experience to guide you through your next steps no matter what you're thinking of. From Early Years to Primary, Primary to Secondary, Secondary to Post 16 and beyond!

We are always thinking one step ahead to ensure that before you reach transition, you have a clear plan of what next. Don't forget, **your voice is really important** and we will take time to make sure you lead the way in your education pathway, that's why we come and visit you and look forward to hearing from you directly, not just through the PEP.

Don't forget, you don't have to wait until your PEP to share your thoughts and ideas, you can contact your education champion anytime and at the end of this report you will find contact numbers and emails for the team. We're here to help you get the very best out of your education and support you along the way.

Below are some examples of next steps and some data on how our young people have moved on in 2023.

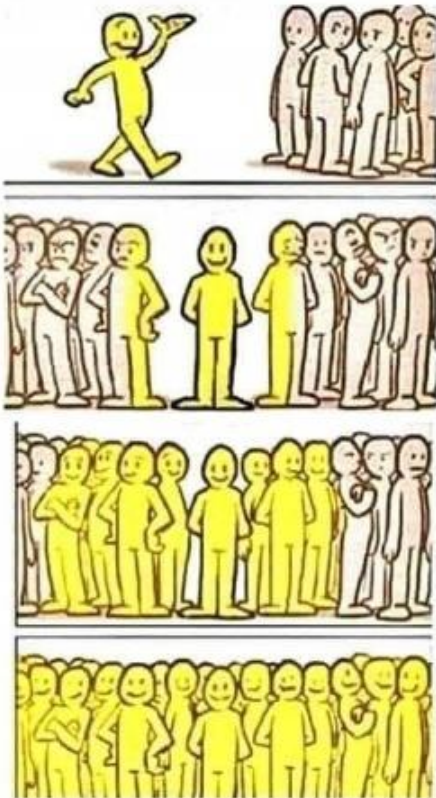
- 100% of you that are looked after made successful **transition** from Primary to Secondary.
- 98% of you that are looked after in Secondary Year 11's went on to either further Education, Apprenticeship or Employment.
- All our Secondary Leavers had **individual support** and guidance from the EET Team who continued to support them throughout the following term, giving them advice on the local offer of education, employment and training and 'checking in' as they navigate through next steps.
- Those of you that are **UASC** (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) were allocated an Education Champion to help them navigate their individual education pathway. Not only do they support you to access education at a level to meet their needs (ESOL etc), they also support you with tablets to help navigate the English Language and translate information into their primary language. Additionally, at a time when you may not have access to the resources that others are open to, we supply you with stationery and backpacks to ensure they have everything they need to access education.



- Each one of you that are Care Leavers attending **University** are supported by Virtual School with visits, advice, support and an Education Bursary in addition to that offered by your course.
- As you move into adulthood, Virtual School are still available to support with information, advice and guidance via their PA. We are happy to sign post and will do all we can to support your PA to support you.
- This coming year we have even more exciting opportunities. We are looking forward to more aspirational trips and visits, further opportunities to expand your education outside of the classroom and making sure you have everything you need to access your courses.

And finally...

This is how your light changes the world. ❤️



We are always keen to hear from you. If you have any thoughts or ideas on how we can support you in education, please don't forget you can contact us direct on the details below attached.

Know that we are very proud to be part of your education journey and that your achievements matter! Remember, whilst exam results are important, success is more than just a grade.

Thank you for allowing us to share your successes in this report and we look forward to sharing so many more over the coming year.

We wish you much success in your education this year and would remind you and those around you to reach out if you need us.

Contacting the CLA & SiaSS Team...

Name	Title	Email	Telephone
Cherie Sears	Virtual School Head	Cherie.sears@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07710 153662
Sherry Landa	Primary Lead & SENDCo	Sherry.landa@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07590 432679
Sarita Dhaliwal	Primary Education Champion	Sarita.dhaliwal@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07834 740463
Danielle Thornton	Secondary Lead	Danielle.thornton@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07787 697867
Kuldip Rayat-Jones	Secondary Education Champion	Kudip.rayat-jones@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07500 106031
Nathan Richardson	Post 16 Education Employment & Training Lead	Nathan.richardson@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07925 893740
Reem Ali	Post 16 EE&T Champion	Reem.ali@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07720 074451
Selmah Chaudhary	Post 16 EE&T Champion	Selmah.Chaudhary@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07808 647619
Harpal Keila	Post 16 EE&T Champion	Harpal.Keila@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07711 564136
Stephanie Burnett	Post 16 EE&T Champion	Stephanie.burnett@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07860 592914
Ewen Godfrey	SiaSS Lead	Ewen.godfrey@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07806 431710
Tina Coombe	Siass Champion	Tina.coombe@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk	07749 709890

Appendix A: Understanding Data

What is Progress 8?

Progress 8 is the accountability measure that determines students' progress across 8 subjects. This is a value added measure whereby students' results will be compared to students who had the same prior attainment score at KS2. The end results will be used to determine the success of secondary schools

Attainment 8?

The Attainment 8 score is the average measure of an individual student's progress across their 8 best performing subjects which fall into three 'Attainment 8 buckets'; if these 8 best subjects do not fall into the three designated buckets for 'English & Maths', 'Ebacc' or 'Other' subjects, the score will not be counted.

What's the difference between Progress 8 and Attainment 8?

The Attainment 8 score measures the achievement of an individual student across their eight best performing subjects. The Progress 8 score measures how well they've progressed since their time in secondary school compared to their peers who were at the same level as them at key stage two. Collective student Progress 8 scores will be used to determine the success of whole secondary schools based on how much progress all students have made.

How do you calculate Attainment 8?

In order to calculate Attainment 8, the traditional GCSE grades are translated into numbers, where a grade 8 will represent the A/A* boundary, a 1 will represent a G and 4 will indicate a pass, the same as that of a C grade.. A 9 has been introduced to recognise truly outstanding work, fewer of these will be awarded than A*s have been historically.

New Conversion Table

New grading structure	Former grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	C
4	
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

Appendix C: Useful links to DfE information about our statutory responsibilities

Virtual School

[Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

New responsibilities – Children with a Social Worker

[£16 million to support young people with a social worker - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Virtual school head role extension to children with a social worker - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Post 16 Education, Employment & Training

[September Guarantee: education and training for young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Glossary

PEP	Personal Education Plan	A PEP (Personal Education Plan) is a document that sets down information about your education, your progress and targets to support your continued learning. There is also personal details that allow us to reflect on wider support that you may have in relation to your care status and of course, most importantly, your voice.
EHCP	Education, Health & Care Plan	An Education Health and Care Plan is a document that sets out what is needed to ensure you are as successful as you can possibly be in your education. It is formulated when you require extra support beyond what the school may be able to provide and it is regularly reviewed to ensure that you are able to access the learning environment and perhaps equipment that is right for you.
SMART Targets	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely Target	A SMART Target is one that everyone involved have had the opportunity to reflect on and ensure is 'fit for the purpose', especially you. The word SMART is an acronym for Specific (it needs to be clear to everyone), Achievable (you need to be able to have a reasonable chance of achieving the hoped outcome), Relevant (it must meet your needs or requirements and not be too general), Timely (not without timelines to ensure that it is reviewed regularly).
P8 or Progress 8	Progress 8	Progress 8 is the accountability measure that determines your progress across 8 subjects. This is a value added measure whereby your results will be compared to students who had the same prior attainment score at KS2.
A8 or Attainment 8	Attainment 8	The Attainment 8 score is the average measure of your progress across their 8 best performing subjects
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	UASC are children who are outside their country of origin to seek asylum in the United Kingdom. They have been separated from parents and relatives, and are not in the care of someone who is responsible for doing so.
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training	This acronym refers to a group of young people who are currently without education, employment or training to occupy them.
Not Known	'Not Known'	This refers to young people who we are unable to make contact with at present to establish whether they have education, employment or training.
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	This acronym refers to an additional need for a person based around Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health challenges
Advocacy	Advocacy	Advocacy means getting support from another person to help you express your views and wishes, and help you stand up for your rights. Someone who helps you in this way is called your advocate.
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant	Someone to support you to understand your feelings and express them confidently in the presence of others.
FAP	Fair Access Protocol	Fair Access Protocol (FAP) is a mechanism developed by the Local Authority in partnership with all schools in its area. The aim is to ensure that vulnerable children, and those who are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, are allocated a school place as quickly as possible.
Reportable Cohort	Reportable Cohort	The 'Reportable Cohort is a group of young people who we report on because they form part of a certain criteria such as age, identifying features or perhaps year group.