



The role of VSK and its offer to Previously Looked After Children

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What is VSK?

- The Virtual School acts as a local authority champion to promote the progress and educational attainment of Children in Care (CiC) and Young Care Leavers (YCL) so they achieve educational outcomes comparable to their peers. Ensuring that they receive a high quality education is the foundation for improving their lives.
- The school does not exist in real terms, or as a building. Children do not attend it - they remain the responsibility of the school at which they are enrolled. VSK is simply an organisation which has been created for the effective co-ordination of educational services at a strategic and operational level.



What do we do?

- Influence policy and develop and improve services for CiC and YCL.
- Promote individual achievement and wellbeing.
- Provide advice, support and training to professionals, schools, colleges and institutions.
- Improve access to specialist services.
- Provide access to professional advice and guidance on education, training and employment.
- Provide additional opportunities for out of school learning and leisure.
- Facilitate access to early education and child care.



My Team



- Marian Smith – Early Years and Primary Lead
- Joanne Kelly – Secondary & EH&WB Lead
- Paul Manning – 16+ and UASC Lead
- Joanne Carpenter - Participation & Engagement Lead





New guidance

Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children (February 2018) Duties commenced Academic Year 2018-19

- Local authorities have a duty under section 23ZZA of the Children Act 1989 (inserted by section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017) to promote the educational achievement of previously looked-after children in their area by providing information and advice to:
 - o any person that has parental responsibility for the child;
- providers of funded early years education, designated teachers for previously looked-after children in maintained schools and academies; and
- any other person the authority considers appropriate for promoting the educational achievement of relevant children.

New guidance

The role of the VSH for previously looked-after children is to promote their educational achievement through the provision of information and advice to their parents, educators and others who the VSH considers necessary.

The VS must:

- **respond to parental requests for advice and information** – e.g. advice on school admissions in their area. Where appropriate, the VSH should sign-post parents to other services that can offer advice and support;
- **respond to requests for advice and information from providers** of early education, designated teachers in maintained schools and academies, and providers of alternative provision in their area in respect of individual children supported by the local authority. In particular, the VSH should develop/ build on existing good working relationship with designated teachers for previously looked-after children in their area; and
- **make general advice and information available** to early years settings and schools to improve awareness of the vulnerability and needs of previously looked-after children. This should include promoting good practice on identifying and meeting their needs, and guidance on effective use of the PP+.

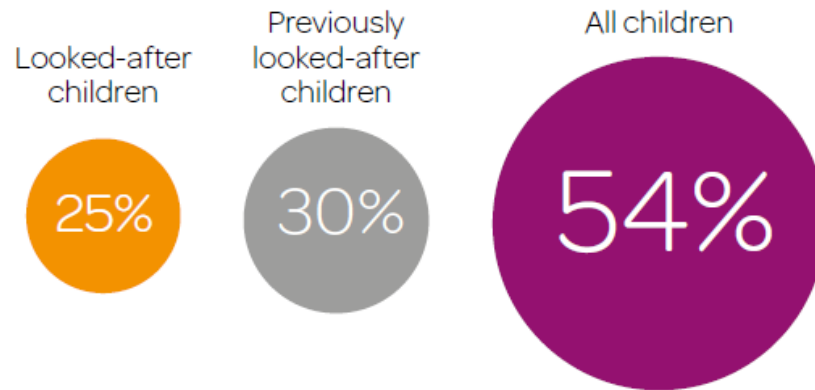
What might providing information and advice look like?

- Providing advice and information to frequently asked questions online.
- Providing advice to individual parents/ carers and schools where they have a query.
- Advising schools on how they can support previously looked after children to improve behaviour to help avoid exclusion becoming necessary.
- Advising schools on how to best use Pupil Premium to support previously looked-after children.

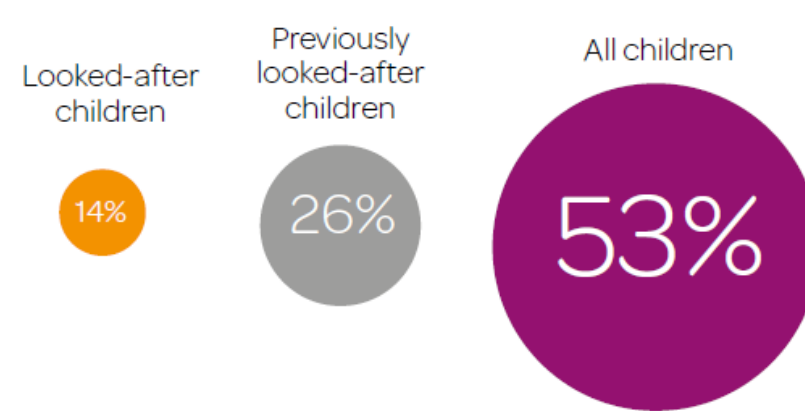


Adoption UK

Percentage of children achieving the expected standard at Key Stage 2 (2016)



Percentage of children achieving 5 good GCSE grades including English and Mathematics (2016)



- Need for better data
- Trend however are true and looked after children and previously looked after children are statistically disadvantaged
- We must continue to drive forward and do more!



Key Themes from Kent



- Admissions
- School understanding of trauma and attachment
- Information Pack (entitlements and funding)
- Support when things start to go wrong

Funding

- Previously Looked After Implementation Grant
- Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)

Disadvantaged pupils	Pupil premium per pupil	Governance
Looked-after children (LAC) defined in the Children Act 1989 as one who is in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, an English local authority	£2,300	Formula based grant allocated to the Virtual School Head
Children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order	£2,300	Formula based grant taken from school census return (January) allocated to the school within total PPG allocation



Education Endowment Foundation



<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk>

Filter Toolkit	1 looked Strand -	Cost -	Evidence Strength -	Impact (months) -
Filter results by keywords	High impact for very low cost, based on extensive evidence.			
Cost	One to one tuition	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+5
Evidence	Moderate impact for high cost, based on extensive evidence.			
Months Impact	Oral language interventions	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+5
Download Toolkit	Moderate impact for very low cost, based on extensive evidence.			
	Outdoor adventure learning	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+4
	Moderate impact for moderate cost, based on moderate evidence.			
	Parental engagement	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+3
	Moderate impact for moderate cost, based on moderate evidence.			
	Peer tutoring	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+5
	Moderate impact for very low cost, based on extensive evidence.			
	Performance pay	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+1
	Low impact for low cost, based on limited evidence.			
	Phonics	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+4
	Moderate impact for very low cost, based on very extensive evidence.			
	Reading comprehension strategies	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+6
	High impact for very low cost, based on extensive evidence.			
	Reducing class size	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	+3
	Moderate impact for high cost, based on moderate evidence.			
	Repeating a year	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	-4
	Negative impact for very high cost, based on moderate evidence.			
	School uniform	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	0
	Very low or no impact for very low cost, based on very limited evidence.			
	Setting or streaming	£££££	ⓐⓑⓓⓔⓕ	-1
	Negative impact for very low cost, based on limited evidence.			



VSK offer



- Information and Advice
- Training
- Direct Support



What does this look like?



Information and Advice

- Advice to parents via Website, phone consultations, emails and some face to face opportunities:-
 - Website with up-to-date information, resources and links to further reading, including:
 - Frequently Asked Questions
 - Pupil Premium Funding explained (for schools and parents)
 - School resources and links to other educational resources and advice on websites such as CORAM Life Education, PAC-UK etc.
 - Contact VSK via the dedicated email address VSKPLAC@kent.gov.uk
 - East Kent (Canterbury, Swale and Thanet) and South Kent (Dover, Shepway and Ashford)
Phone: 03000 421157 Address: Brook House, John Wilson Bus. Park, Reeves Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3SS
 - West Kent (Maidstone, Malling, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells) and North Kent (Dartford, Gravesham and Sevenoaks)
Phone: 03000 412777 Address: Worrall House, 30 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, Kent ME19 4AE



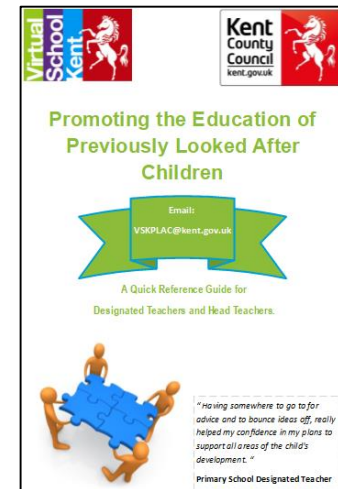
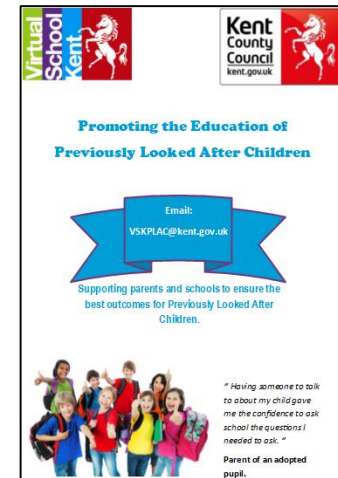


What does this look like?



Training

- Advice, information and training for School's Designated Teachers and School Staff, including:
 - Designated Teacher training and update training three times a year in the seven localities across Kent, incorporating the latest Previously Looked After Children advice and support.
 - School Attachment training in line with the latest research.
 - Support and Guidance with EPPLAC meetings.
 - Provision of Nurture Group Initiatives and Mental Health and Wellbeing projects with participating schools across Kent.
 - Quick Guide Leaflet for Designated Teachers and Schools.
- Bespoke training developed and delivered in conjunction with Adoption service for parents





What does this look like?



Support

- attending Education Plan PLAC meetings (where appropriate).
 - Contact VSK via the dedicated email address VSKPLAC@kent.gov.uk
 - Quick Guide Leaflet for parents
- Senior Education Support Officer for Previously Looked After Children to oversee VSK advice across Kent.
- VSK FELOs (Fostering Education Liaison Officers) involvement in the transition support offered to Early Years children moving to adoption, SGOs or CAOs.
- Liaising with other services
- Raising the profile of Previously Looked after Children



VSK support so far...

VSK have Assistant Heads, FELOs and a newly appointed Senior Education Support Officer, who since September, have supported with over:

- Over 30 schools across Kent giving advice over the phone on interventions, Pupil Premium Funding and signposting them to other resources.
- Over 40 EPAC and other professional meetings including transition planning for moving to adoptive parents.
- Over 30 phone consultations with parents to support with advice on school, SEN and Pupil Premium Funding issues.



VSK Participation and Engagement: Plans for Adopted Young People



- Investigate with young people what participation events and activities they would like to be involved in
- Research to find out if young people know they have the right to have a opinion about the services they use and/or receive
- Ensure young people are given opportunities to have their say if they want to
- Make sure young people's views are heard and taken seriously
- Ensure that Kent is involved in national initiatives around young people's voice and adoption

VSK Participation and Engagement

How will we do this?

- Facilitate fun activities to get to know young people and help them feel included
- Explore setting up a Young Person Adoption Council to look at the wider issues young people face
- Employ adopted young people in the Participation Team
- Ensure the young person's voice is taken into account when employing staff who work within the adoption service

What CiC and CL's say

- “...because of things that have happened I don't always handle things the way you think”
- “...education isn't always my priority”
- “...sometimes I do things to avoid having to do other things”
- “...don't single me out for being in care”
- “...include me in decisions that are about me”

A letter to Ed Timpson CBE – CAFCASS Chair (Former Minister of State for Children and Families)

- Video





Activity



- Taking the information shared today and most importantly Kay-Lee's amazing words
 - a) What learning are you taking away?
 - b) What actions are you going to take home or into the workplace?



Any questions or things you feel we need to do?



Thank you for your time