

Oldham Virtual School

Progress Update

September 2019 – January 2020



Oldham
Council

Oldham Virtual School Progress Update

Within the Virtual School annual report 2018 – 2019, developments were identified for the academic year 2019 – 2020.

This progress update reviews each point and the work to date.

Phasing the introduction of the Post 16 ePEP to enable rigorous tracking and quality assurance of PEPs and educational engagement and outcomes in Years 12 and 13.

Prior to the end of the Summer term, 2019 the Virtual School team engaged the After Care team manager and practitioners to review a range of Post 16 ePEP templates already in use by a number of Virtual Schools. On reviewing statutory requirements of PEP documentation. The Post 16 ePEP went live in September 2019 for CLA in Year 12. This will be extended to include Year 13 in September 2020.

ePEP briefings are resuming in Spring term, and the Virtual School will be offering briefing sessions to Post 16 education providers and CSC colleagues working with and supporting this cohort.

Integrating partnership working across educational services, children's social care and wider agencies to ensure that the educational needs of CLA are understood and addressed.

The Virtual School continues to promote cross agency working and engage with partners to ensure that the educational needs of CLA remain a key priority. The VSH and team members sit on a number of multi-agency groups and panels.

In partnership with the LSCB and partner agencies, deliver Trauma Symptoms Checklist for Children (TSCC) Pilot for CLA.

During the Autumn term the proposal for the pilot was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board.

In January 2020 partners from the following services completed a 3 day training programme in the theory, implementation and analysis of the Trauma Symptoms Children's Checklist (TSCC);

- Healthy Young Minds
- Healthy Young Minds (CLA)
- Educational Psychology
- Oldham Virtual School
- Youth Justice Service (Positive Steps)
- Children's Social Care
- Phoenix Team

The pilot will run from January to June 2020, with a specific focus on assessment and intervention for CLA with a full evaluation of impact and next steps.

Work with partners to develop provision for identifying and supporting individual needs with a specific focus on SEMH.

Work on supporting the individual needs of CLA remains a key priority, either through the Virtual Schools direct work with children and young people, supporting colleagues in understanding the individual needs and impact on access to education, training or the commissioning of specialist services (addressed further in points below).

Work with partners to develop ‘Whole School’ approaches to understanding trauma and attachment difficulties.

During the Autumn term the Virtual School commissioned the delivery of 2 days training by Trauma Informed Schools UK (TISUK). This training was aimed at senior leaders across Oldham’s Secondary schools and partners from local authority education services to support and develop understanding of trauma and the impact this has on access to education, provision adjustments and outcomes.

LA representation;

- SEND
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Team
- Social Emotional Mental Health Service (SENHs)
- Oldham Virtual School
- Inclusion Team
- Educational Psychology Service

Staff from 8 Oldham Secondary schools attended the training.

Following the training, 2 schools are interested in moving forward with whole school training and development and becoming a trauma informed school. This programme will be delivered by TISUK and supported by the Oldham Educational Psychology Service (through the Virtual School commission).

Develop admissions and transfer protocol for CLA with Oldham Secondary schools, Admissions and Inclusion team.

The Virtual School has worked closely with colleagues from the admissions and inclusion team to develop the CLA placement Protocol (Secondary Schools). The initial draft is due to be reviewed by local authority officers and subsequently shared with secondary headteachers for agreement and implementation.

Develop Virtual School handbook to support partners across schools and social care.

Work is underway to develop a multi-agency handbook to support all key partners in understanding roles and responsibilities regarding all aspects of supporting the educational needs of CLA.

The Virtual School Headteacher has reviewed and mapped out the statutory duties of all partners. The handbook 'Looking after Learning' is being developed and will be shared with partners for the start of the academic year 2020 – 2021. Briefing sessions will also be developed to accompany this.

Embed the new governance structures for the Virtual School

The first meeting of the Virtual School Governing Body took place in November 2019. The agenda for the initial meeting was;

- Re-visit and agree TOR for the VS Governing Body
- Review of the Annual Report 2018 – 2019
- Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) Policy

The Spring Term Governing Body meeting is due to take place on 23rd March with an agreed focus on;

- Autumn term review
- 2019 – 2020- Development updates
- attendance and exclusions (data review)
- The CLA Champions scheme
- Agree reporting systems to Corporate Parent Panel

In partnership with the North West Virtual Schools, NAVSH and NWADCS contribute to the development of Peer Review Processes to include the remit of the Virtual School.

In November, a number of Virtual School Headteachers from across the North West completed the National Association of Virtual School Headteachers (NAVSH) peer review training.

Alongside this, the Virtual School Headteacher has been part of a working group to discuss and further develop the inclusion of the Virtual School in existing Peer Reviews, such as SEND and Early Years.

Commission Speech and Language Therapist (0.6) for CLA

There has been a delay in recruiting to this post as the Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) Service moved over to a new health trust. The post has now been processed and agreed and recruitment is underway.

This post is not intended to replace the universal SaLT services that CLA should access, but to complement the offer by providing support and training for the professionals working with the child or young person.

Explore further options for commissioning Educational Psychologist support

With a national shortage of Educational Psychologists, recruitment to this post has been challenging and two previous recruitment attempts were unsuccessful.

Working closely with the Principal Psychologist, the Virtual School has secured targeted EP support to August 2020, whilst a third round of recruitment is underway.

The commissioned service is aimed to provide enhanced support for the network of professionals that support CLA e.g schools, social workers, carers. This will be provided through training, consultation or where agreed, direct work with the child or young person. This service is not intended to replace the access to EP involvement that CLA are entitled to through school provision and as part of the Graduated Response to meeting individual needs.

Appoint Engagement Officer and PEP Officer to further develop the work of the Virtual School Team.

Towards the end of the Autumn term the Virtual School secured permission to recruit to the above posts. These posts have been advertised and interviews are due to take place at the end of February. These posts will be funded through Pupil Premium Plus (PP+).

Commission designated EHCP Officer for Oldham CLA (Educated both in and out of borough)

The Headteacher from the Virtual School has met with the SEND service manager to review the current role and job description for the SEND (EHCP) Officers. Work is now underway to review this role with the specific remit for Oldham's CLA and take through the job evaluation and recruitment process. This post will be funded through Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding.