

Summary Report - Halton Virtual School Annual Report 2024–2025:

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Headteacher: Joanne Dunning

Overview

Halton Virtual School (HVS) is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of Looked-After Children (LAC), with strategic oversight for Post-Looked After Children (PLAC) and Children with a Social Worker (CWSW). The year saw leadership changes, with the Interim Headteacher becoming substantive in March 2024, and a team restructure planned for January 2026 to meet new statutory duties.

Key Priorities & Progress

1. **Reading Strategy:** Developed a comprehensive reading support programme, including targeted training, book parcels, and reading age data collection.
2. **Virtual School College:** Progressed the development of a Virtual College offer, enhanced NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) tracking, and increased apprenticeship opportunities for care-experienced young people.
3. **Attendance & Exclusions:** Strengthened attendance monitoring and multi-agency interventions, resulting in improved attendance (Primary: 96%, Secondary: 87%) and a reduction in exclusions.
4. **Support for Vulnerable Groups:** Expanded support for Kinship carers, CWSW, PLAC, and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), including new training and resources.

Cohort & Outcomes

- **Cohort:** 465 LAC (0–19), 202 care leavers (19–22), 330 PLAC in Halton schools.
- **Placement & School Moves:** 75 children had placement moves (increase from previous year); 26 had school moves.
- **SEND:** High proportion of LAC have SEND/EHCPs; 70% of EHCPs cite Social, Emotional, and Mental Health as primary need.
- **Academic Outcomes:**
 - **EYFS:** 44% achieved a Good Level of Development (up from 27%).
 - **Year 1 Phonics:** 62% met the standard.
 - **KS2:** Improvements in Reading, Maths, and Combined outcomes.
 - **KS4:** 29% achieved Grade 4+ in English, 19% in Maths, 14% in both.
 - **Progress:** 74% of KS1/2 pupils and 63% of KS3/4 made expected progress.

Attendance & Exclusions

- **Attendance:** Overall 91% (Primary 96%, Secondary 87%).
- **Exclusions:** One permanent exclusion; reduction in suspensions, especially repeat exclusions, due to targeted support and trauma-informed training.

Post-16 & Care Leavers

- **16–18:** 73% in education, employment, or training (up from 64%).
- **19–22:** 49% in EET; ongoing work to reduce NEET rates through partnerships and targeted support.

Pupil Premium Plus & Funding

- £838,567 allocated; 65% spent directly on children, with increased focus on measuring impact and benchmarking against other LAs.

Training & Development

- 301 delegates from 249 schools attended training; focus on attachment, trauma, and inclusive practice. Team members upskilled to deliver specialist training.

Action Plan & Next Steps (2025–26)

- Increase school readiness and GLD in Reception.
- Reduce attainment gaps for LAC.
- Embed support for vulnerable groups and the Virtual College offer.
- Further strengthen attendance, exclusions, and NEET interventions.

Further Information

More details, policies, and resources are available at www.myvirtualschool.org.

If you need a version tailored for a specific audience or a more visual summary (e.g., for governors or parents), just let me know!