

### **The Virtual School: the team**

Virtual School Head teacher  
Virtual School Team Leader  
Virtual School Team Officers x 4  
Virtual School Team Mentors x 4  
Virtual School Team Administrator  
Virtual School Team Data Office

The Virtual School Team is part of Learning Services and is directly accountable to the Director of Learning Services, Margaret Libreri.

The VST comprises 10 staff (full time equivalence 7.5) and is located at Forest Lodge Education Centre.

### **The Virtual School: the purpose**

The overall goal of the Virtual School is to promote the emotional wellbeing and educational achievement of the children and young people in the care of Leicester City Council by:

- Promoting a deeper understanding of children and young people who have experienced separation and loss, and whose pre and post-care experience impacts on attainment and achievement
- Supporting and working with others to help children and young people to overcome these barriers
- Improving school attendance
- Minimising fixed term exclusions
- Raising expectations, attainment and accelerating progress
- Encouraging looked after children and young people to participate in positive activities in and out of school
- Promoting effective multiagency working

### **The Virtual School: a collaborative endeavour**

In order to fulfil its goals, it is essential that the Virtual School Team works in collaboration with a wide range of other organisations, professionals and stakeholders in Leicester City and in other local authorities.

#### **These include:**

- Children and Young People
- Leicester Children's Trust Board
- The Corporate Parenting Forum & Executive

- Senior officers in Children’s Services & other directorates
- Primary, secondary and special school head teachers
- Designated teachers and all other school staff such as SENCOs year tutors, class and subject teachers, learning mentors, classroom assistants
- School Governors
- Colleges
- Alternative providers
- Whatever It Takes (Citywide literacy initiative)
- Carers
- Residential children’s homes
- Social workers and managers
- Independent Reviewing Officers
- Youth Offending Service
- Secondary Behaviour Support Service
- Primary Behaviour Support Team
- Special Education Service
- Education Welfare Service
- Educational Psychology Service
- School improvement professionals
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Admissions and Exclusions
- The Heritage Panel
- Connexions
- De Montford and Leicester Universities

### **The Virtual School: tracking, monitoring and intervening**

Tracking the attendance, exclusions, and attainment & progress of looked after children and young people to inform effective and appropriate interventions is at the heart of the work of the virtual school team.

The full team has monthly monitoring meetings where data is analysed and the list of the most vulnerable young people is reviewed. This, in turn, determines how the resources of the team are deployed.

There are a range of services and interventions that the VST provides in support of Looked After Children and Young People, and the schools and professionals that work with them. These services and interventions currently include:

- visiting all City secondary schools, and primary schools with larger LAC cohorts, to work with Designated Teachers and other staff to achieve the best possible outcomes for looked after children
- exploring ways of working more strategically with schools with larger numbers of LAC
- working with the City’s Children’s Homes, the EBSD Federation schools, and the Educational Psychology Service to achieve improved outcomes for young people
- providing professional development opportunities for governors, designated teachers, carers, and social workers through a programme of termly multiagency training

- identifying young people in Key Stage 4 who are willing to engage and likely to benefit from private tuition in English and maths to prepare for GCSE and other examinations, and organising its provision with schools, carers and young people
- facilitating 1:1 tuition at other Key Stages where necessary
- providing funded support hours to schools to overcome short term difficulties a young person may be experiencing, or provide a short term boost to learning
- funding for additional vocational provision where necessary & appropriate
- supporting for positive activities in and out of school: music, art, drama, dance, sport, educational trips and visits
- supporting and facilitating The Letterbox Club to promote an interest in reading and improve standards in literacy
- offering VST mentoring support
- providing guidance, advice and training on the Personal Education Plans (PEP) and attending PEP meetings where necessary
- seeking and supporting creative solutions when children and young people are in crisis, including allocating extra resources where appropriate
- monitoring those students who are not accessing a full school timetable of 25 hours for whatever reason, through monthly meetings of the Target 25 group of senior officers, which takes a multiagency, problem solving approach to tackling reduced access to school
- encouraging the effective use of the Pupil Premium Plus