

Newcastle Virtual School Annual Report 2017/18

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Headlines

- Numbers of statutory age children in the VS rose to 372 in June 2018. This was an increase from 326 September 2016 and 340 in September 2017.
- 70% of children attended a good or outstanding Ofsted rated school.
- 60% of children were educated in Newcastle schools.
- 19.7 % of children had 1 or more school changes. This is 3% higher than the national average.
- 53.8% had an identified special educational need. This is 2.3% lower than the national figure for LAC.
- The most common primary need for an EHCP was social, emotional and mental health.
- Key Stage 1 results improved on 2017 results in all areas.
- In Key Stage 2 there was an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the reading, grammar punctuation spelling and maths test.
- Newcastle Key Stage 2 LAC pupils made more progress than their peers nationally against all 3 progress measures.
- The Attainment 8 score in Key stage 4 in Newcastle was 20.9 compared with the national equivalent of 18.9.
- The Progress 8 score for the same cohort of pupils was -1.23, which is an improvement on the figure of -1.36 in 2017 and in line with the national figure of -1.20.

- 4% of care leavers were in higher education which is a drop of 2% on the previous year
- Newcastle LAC absence rates from school (4.4%) were just below the national levels (4.5%)
- 2018 LAC persistent absence rates of 9.5% were lower than for all Newcastle pupils (13.3% in 2018)

Introduction. Karl Harms Interim Virtual School Headteacher

As Interim Virtual School Headteacher I am pleased to present this report for the academic year 2017/18 which covers the profile of our children, their academic achievements and progress at school.

2017-18 was an unsettled period for the virtual school as the Virtual School Headteacher was absent from work on adoption leave. The position was covered with the secondment of the Senior Education Achievement Worker to the position of Virtual School Manger. On return from adoption leave in January 2019 the Virtual School Headteacher resigned from post. This disruption fell within reporting years 2017/18 and 2018/19;

An interim headteacher was appointed for the period 01/04/2019-31/03/20, consequently this report for 2017/18 was written retrospectively to comply with reporting requirements.

In line with DfE reporting, the data included in this summary is based upon children and young people who have been continuously looked after for a minimum of 12 months from April 2017 to March 2018.

Newcastle Virtual School

What is the role of the Virtual School?

Virtual School Headteachers are responsible for promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the local authority.

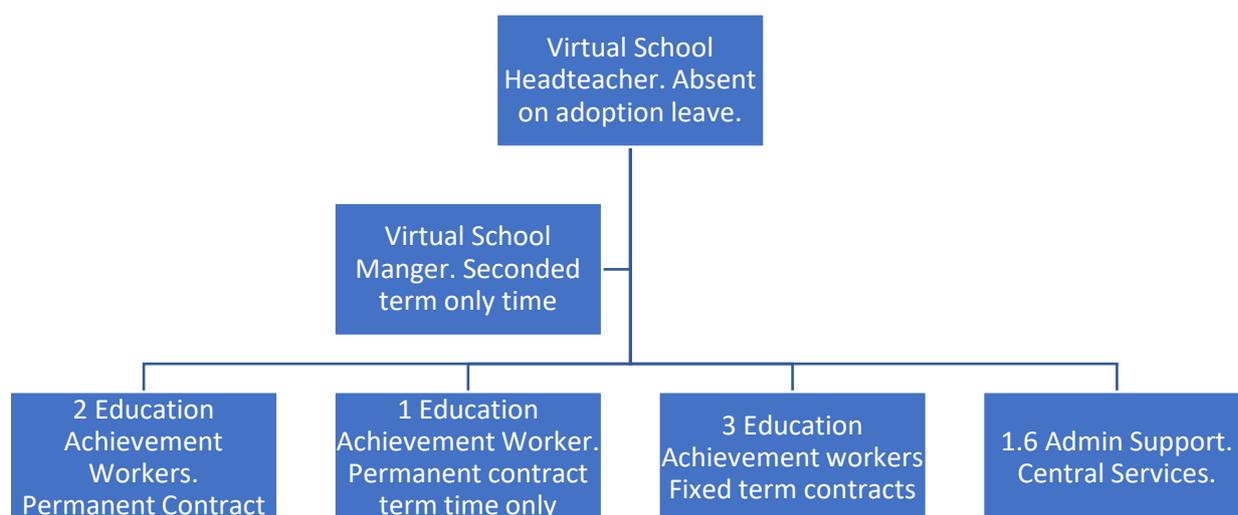
Virtual School Headteachers are responsible for managing pupil premium funding for LAC and for allocating it to schools and alternative provision.

The Virtual School works in partnership with the child or young person's school/educational setting to ensure that they are supported to fulfil their potential at all stages of their education, and to give them the best opportunity to be successful in their adult lives.

Staffing 2017-18

Role	F/T or P/T
Virtual School Head Teacher (Absent on adoption leave)	1.0
Virtual school Manager (Seconded to cover adoption leave)	1.0 Term time
Education Achievement Worker	1.0 Term Time
Education Achievement Worker	1.0
Education Achievement Worker	25 hours a week
Administrative Support Officer (Data & Finance)	0.6
Administrative Support Officer (PEPs)	1.0
Connexions	0.2

Structure Diagram



Profile of learners and numbers on role at the virtual school.

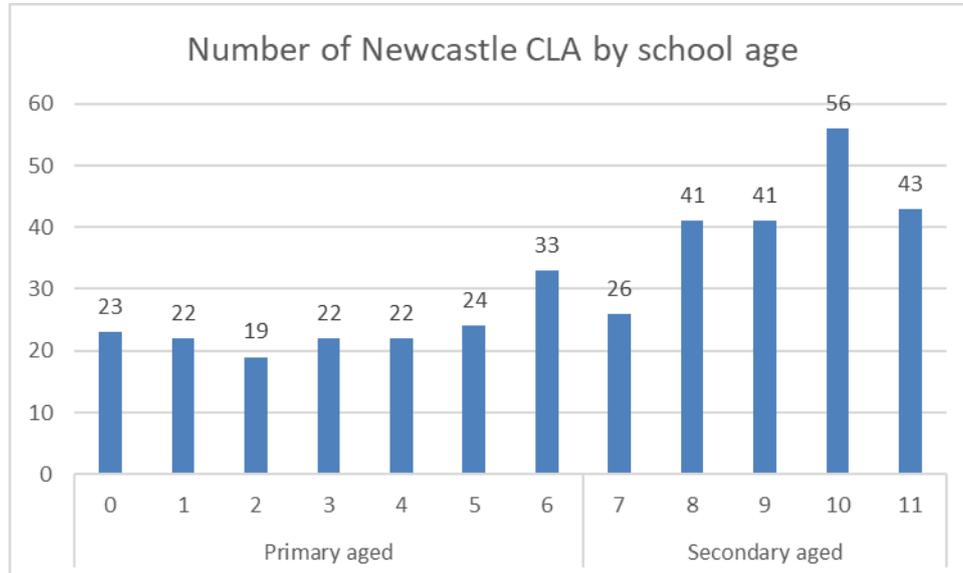
How many learners on roll?

As of June 2018, there were 372 looked after children in Reception to Year 11 (this includes any length of time in care)¹. The numbers of children in the virtual school has grown over the previous three years.

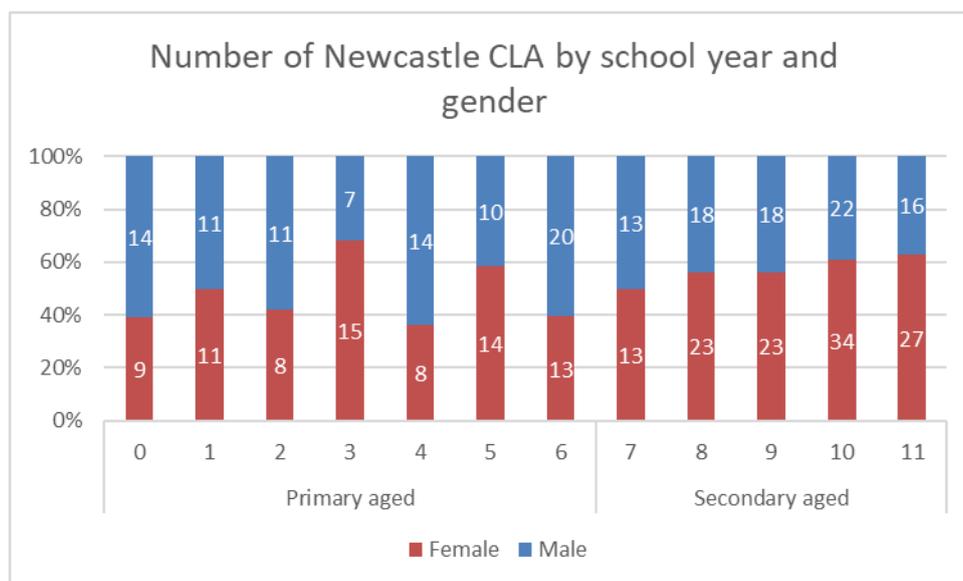
Date	CLA Numbers: Reception to Yr11
01/09/2016	326
01/09/2017	340
01/06/2018	372

What is the profile of the cohort?

Of the 372 Newcastle LAC, 44% were primary aged and 56% were secondary aged. There are slightly more female learners than male (53% and 47% respectively). Whilst males were split 50/50 between primary and secondary, there were more female learners in secondary than primary (61% vs 39%).



¹ Source: Capita One and Care First case management systems



60% of LAC pupils were educated in Newcastle schools and the remainder in schools outside Newcastle LA (40%).

As of October 2018, 70% of Newcastle LAC in Reception to Year 11 attended a good or outstanding Ofsted rated school. This is a 5% increase on July 2017 data.

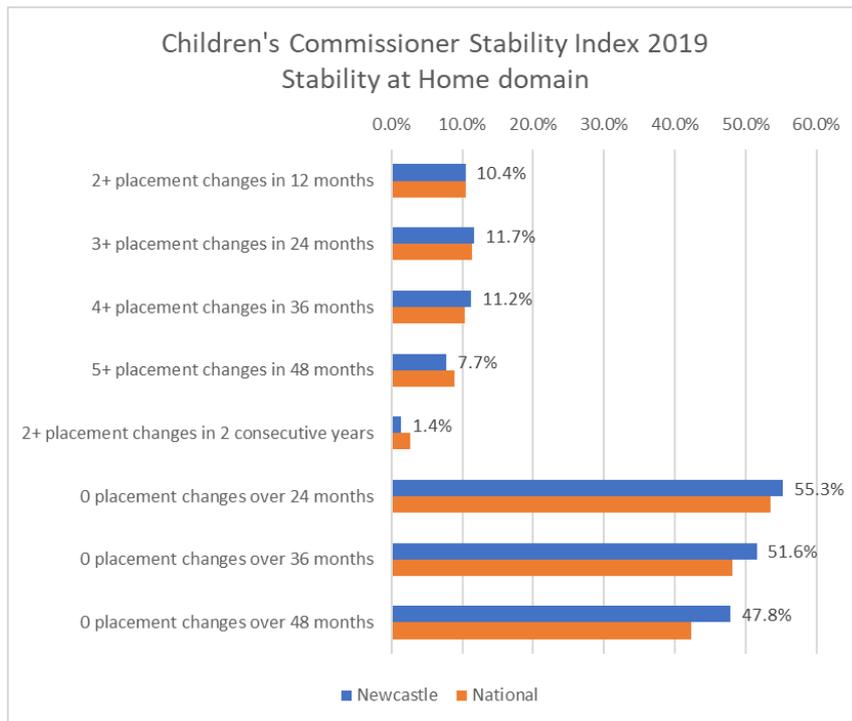
How well do we promote placement and school stability?

‘The Children’s Commissioner Stability Index is an annual measure of the stability of the lives of children in care. It was first launched in 2017 to shine a light on the issue of stability, provide data that allows stability to be monitored over time, and ultimately drive improvements in stability for children in care’².

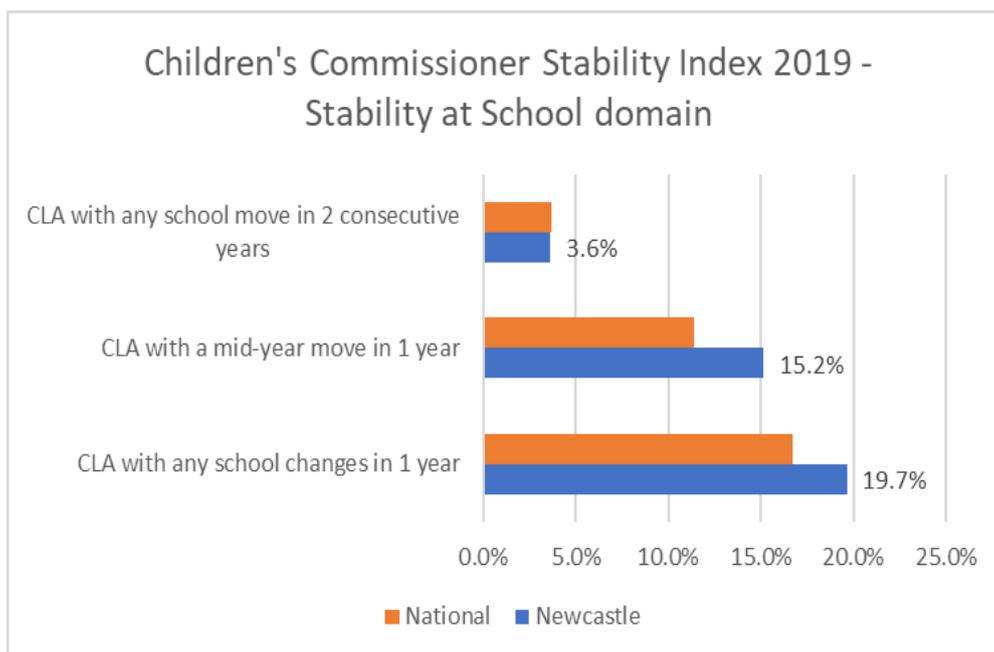
The Stability Index 2019 (2017/18 data), includes three domains, Stability at Home, Stability at School and Stability in Professional Support. Underlying local authority level data from the Home and School domains are presented here for Newcastle.

The Stability at Home domain measures how often a child experiences a placement move. The chart below shows there were 10.4% of LAC with 2+ placement changes in 12 months in Newcastle, this was the same as that nationally. Whilst 55.3% of LAC had no placements changes over 24 months (53.5% nationally); 51.6% had no placement moves over 36 months (48.1% nationally) and 47.8% had no placement moves over 48 months (42.3% nationally).

² <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/stability-index-2019/>

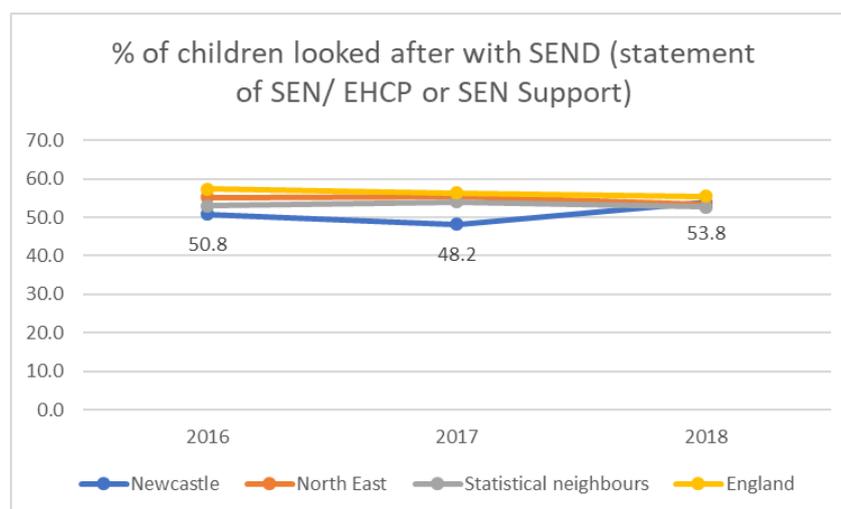


The Stability at School domain includes how often a LAC moves school (amongst over indicators). The underlying data, presented in the chart below suggests 19.7% of LAC had 1 or more school changes in one year, higher than the national average (16.7%). 15.2% had a mid-year move in one year (11.4% nationally) and 3.6% had moved school in two consecutive years (3.7% nationally).



How many of the cohort had Special Educational Needs?

Nationally 55.5% of LAC have identified special education needs (SEND) - 26.5% have an EHCP and 29.0% have SEN Support. In Newcastle over half (53.8%) of LAC had identified special educational need compared with 15.6% of 23.3% of LAC have an EHCP and 30.5% have SEN Support compared with 2.5% and 13.1% respectively for all pupils³.



How do Educational Achievement Workers support children with identified Special Educational Needs?

The virtual school co-operates closely with SEN caseworkers during all stages of the Sen process. From initial identification and assessment application, through to ensuring that out of authority placements in special schools are appropriate.

The virtual school commissions Educational Psychologist support to advise and assist with the SEN process

Duties to previously looked after children

Virtual school duties for previously looked after children are not covered in this reporting year. The responsibility of the Virtual Headteacher was extended to cover PLAC in September 2018.

Achievement and Progress

The reported data is restricted to children who have been in care for more than 12 months. This at times results in cohorts of children numbering below 10, therefore individual children can potentially have a disproportionate influence upon percentage based data.

³ DfE March 2018 Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities in England, 31 March 2018 via LAIT

How did our children progress in Early Years?

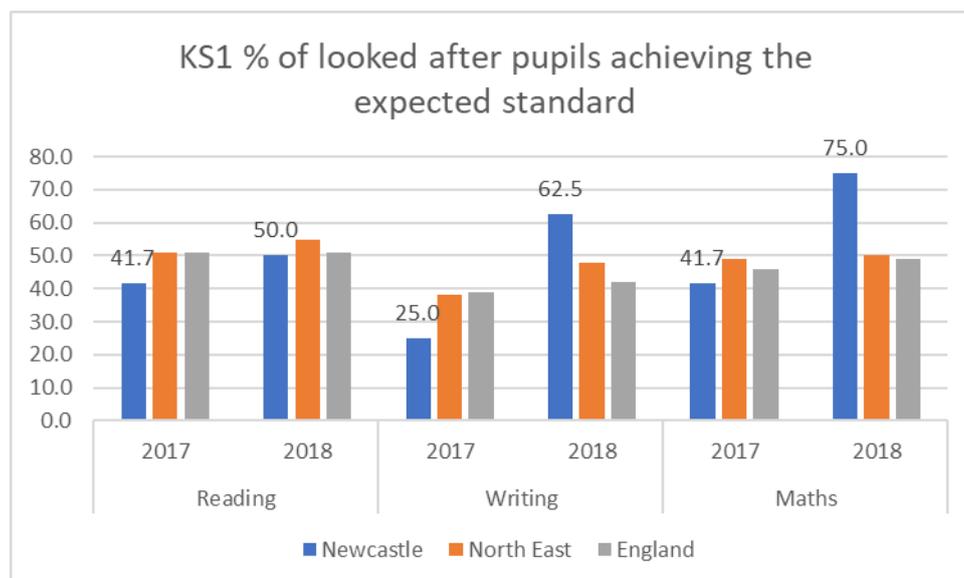
In 2017/18 there were 5 LAC pupils in the EYFSP cohort. Of these, 3 were educated in Newcastle LA and 2 out of authority. 20% (1 pupil) achieved a Good Level of Development, below the national LAC figure of 47% and this compares to 70.9% for all Newcastle LA pupils.

How do our children achieve at Key Stage 1?

The 2017/18 KS1 LAC cohort consisted of 8 pupils who were in care for 12 months, although 23 children in total were in care during the academic year. Of the 8 children, 6 were educated in Newcastle LA and 2 out of authority; 2 were male and 6 were female; and 2 had SEN Support (there were no looked after children with an EHCP in this cohort).

In 2017/18 the proportion of LAC achieving the expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths was higher than the 2016/17 cohort with 37.5% compared to 25%. The proportion achieving the expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths moved above the national LAC average (37%). This compares to 68% for all Newcastle LA pupils.

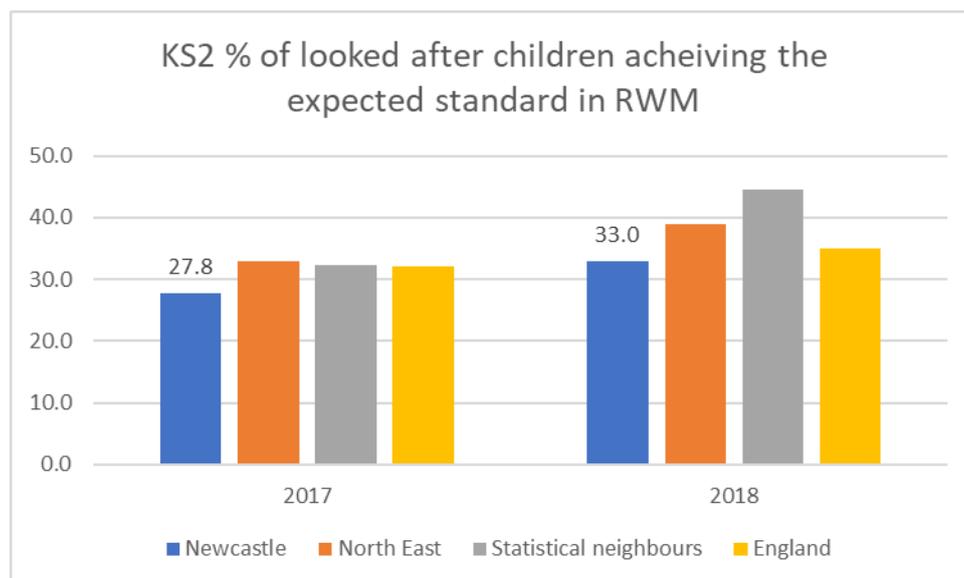
The chart below shows the proportion achieving the expected standard for each subject separately. The performance of LAC achieving the expected standard improved on 2017 results for all individual subjects (reading, writing, maths and science). Performance in Newcastle were above LAC in all individual subjects except for reading which was 1 percentage point below.



How well did our children achieve at Key Stage 2?

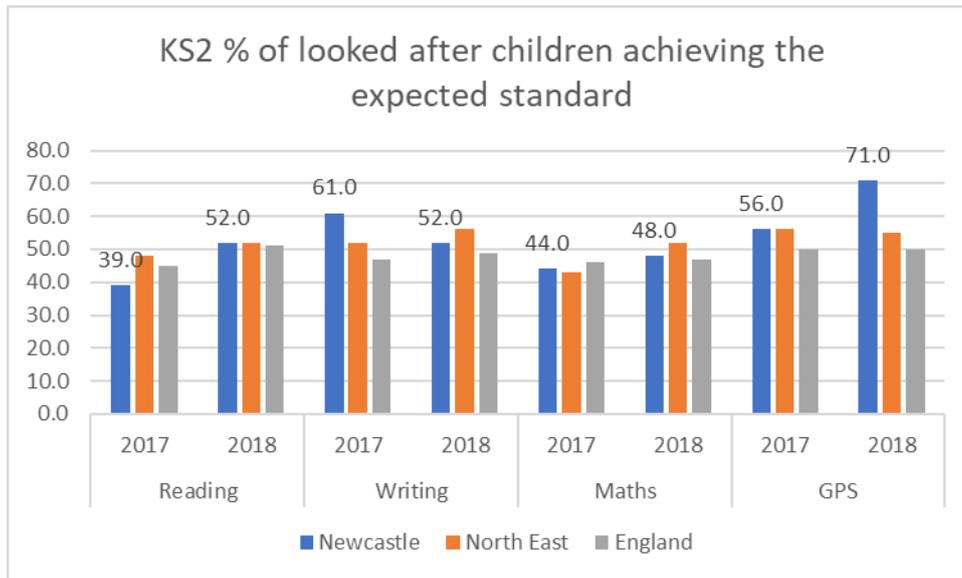
The 2017/18 KS2 (Year 6) cohort included 21 pupils. Of these 10 were educated in Newcastle LA and 11 out of authority; 13 were male and 8 were female; and 2 had SEN Support. There were 35 children in care during the academic year.

The proportion achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths improved by 5.2 percentage points to 33% compared to 2017 results (27.8%).



All results in reading, writing and maths for the LAC cohort remained considerably below the results for all Newcastle pupils with 33% achieving the expected standard as opposed to 70% for all Newcastle pupils in 2017/18.

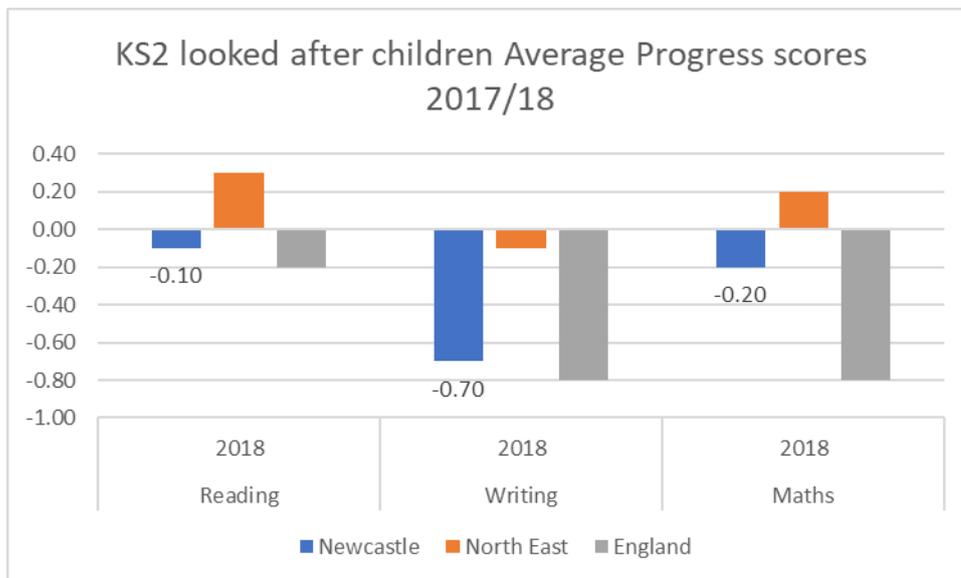
There was an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing, grammar punctuation spelling and maths. Newcastle LAC achieved above national LAC figure in all areas. There was a decrease in the proportion of pupils achieving the writing teacher assessment, now 52%. This figure remains higher than the national LAC figure of 49%.



How much progress did our children make between KS1 and KS2?

In 2017/18 the progress measure for the LAC cohort in comparison with other Key Stage 2 learners with similar Key Stage 1 attainment, was highest in reading at -0.1 and lowest in Writing (-.070)

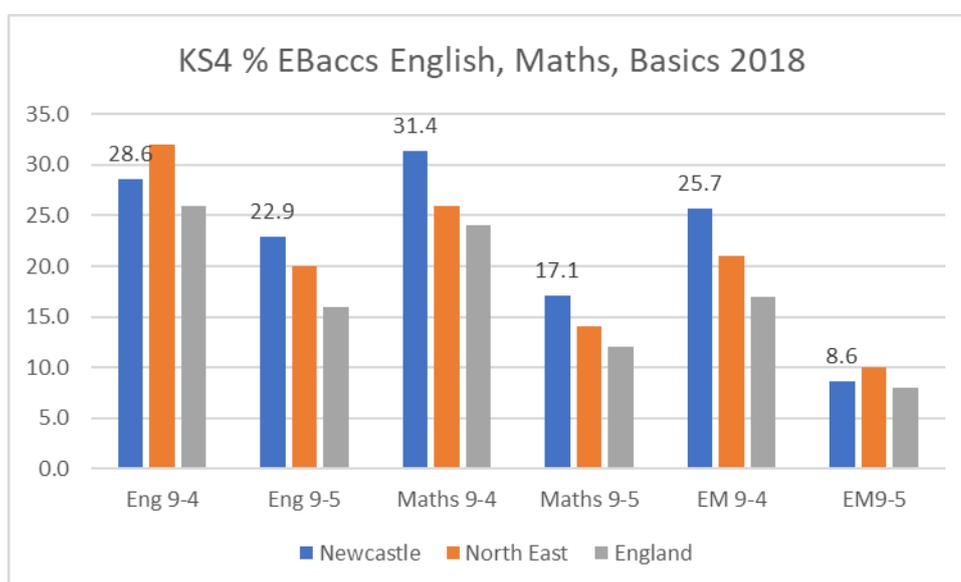
Newcastle LAC pupils made more progress than their peers nationally against all 3 progress measures (reading, writing, maths).



How well do our young people achieve in English and Maths at KS4?

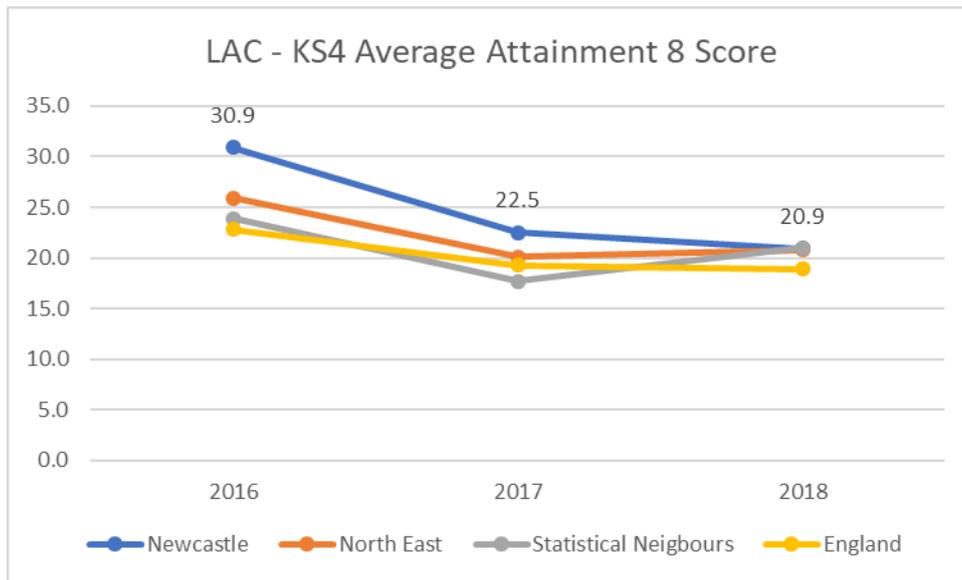
There were 35 LAC or 12 months or more in the KS4 cohort. Of these 21 were educated in Newcastle LA and 14 out of authority; 13 were male and 22 were female; and 2 had SEN Support. There were a total of 52 children and young people in care during the academic year.

Newcastle looked after children achieved above the national equivalent comparators in the EBaccs English, Maths and Basics (combined English and Maths). 8.6% of this cohort achieved a grade 5 (strong pass) or higher in the Basics measure, above the LAC national comparison of 7.8%. However, this is down from the 2017 figure of 11.1%.

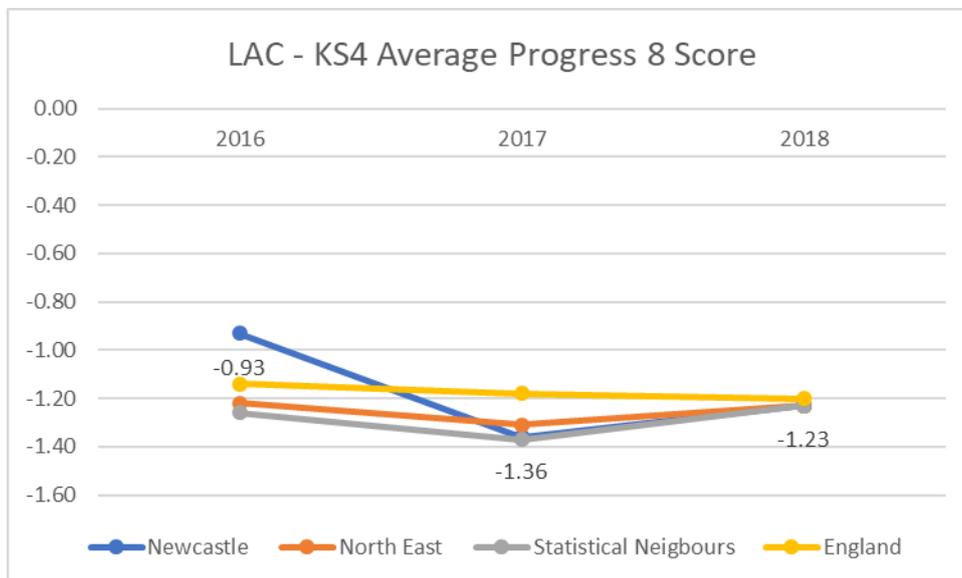


How well did our young people achieve across all subjects (Achievement 8 and Progress 8)

The Assessment 8 score for looked after children and young people in Newcastle was 20.9 in 2017/18, which is above the national equivalent of 18.9. The A8 score has however reduced from 22.5 in 2016/17 and from 30.9 in 2015/16.



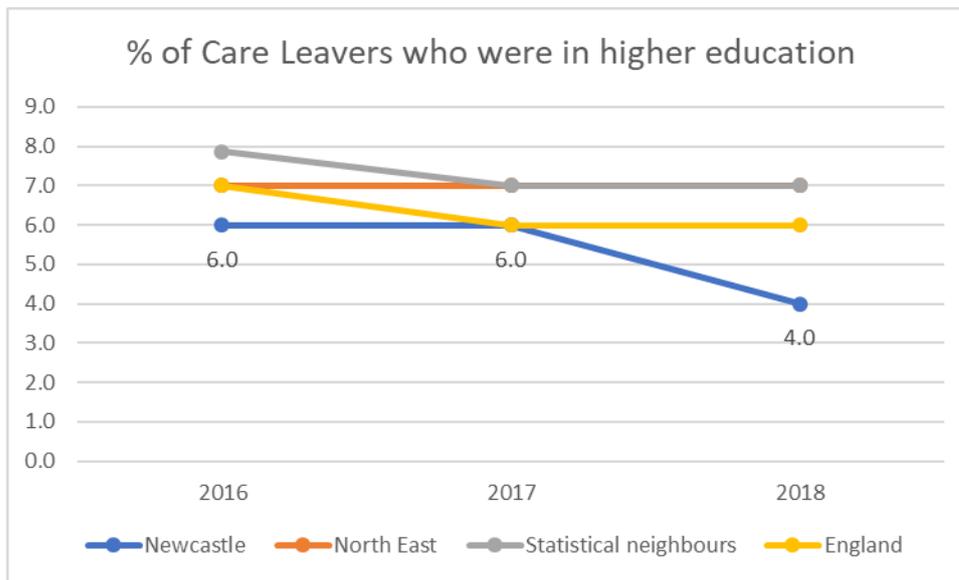
The Progress 8 score for Newcastle LAC is -1.23 , which is an improvement on the figure of -1.36 in 2017 and in line with the national LAC figure of -1.20 . This compares to -0.14 for all Newcastle Key Stage 4 pupils and -0.02 for all pupils nationally. This means that pupils who have been in care made less progress than their peers both locally and nationally.



How well do our young people achieve and participate in Higher Education?

In 2018, 4% of care leavers⁴ in Newcastle were in higher education, i.e. studies beyond A level. This compared with 6% in England and 7% in the North East and Statistical Neighbours.

⁴ Source: Children looked after in England 2018 LA tables revised.



A further 13% of care leavers were in education other than higher education, below the national (20%) and North East (15%) averages and 29% were in training or employment, above the national average (25%) but below the North East average (31%).

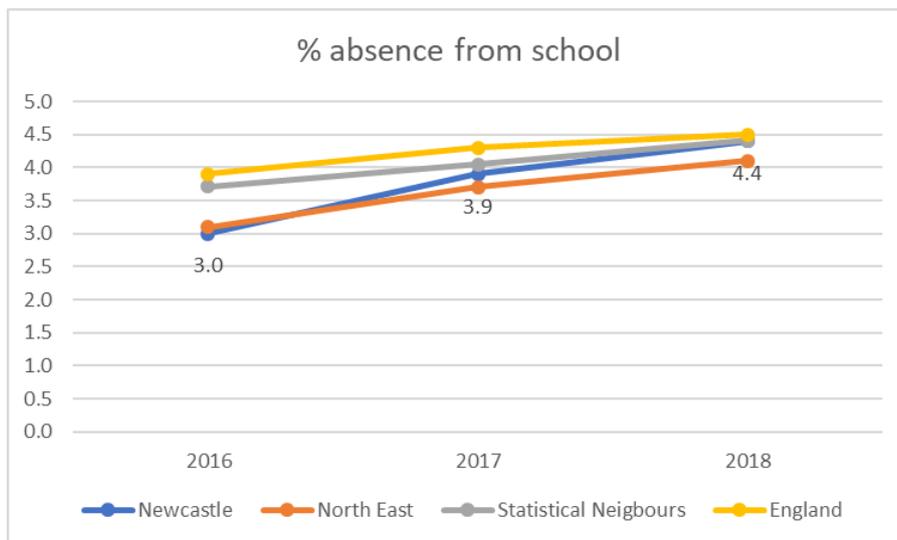
A higher percentage of care leavers in Newcastle were not in education, employment or training (NEET), 48% compared with 39% nationally and 43% in the North East. A higher proportion were NEET due to illness/ disability and 'other reasons' compared with nationally and for the North East.

% of care leavers now aged 19,20, 21 years	England	North East	Newcastle
In higher education i.e. studies beyond A level	6	7	4
In education other than higher education	20	15	13
In training or employment	25	31	29
Total % in education, employment or training	51	52	46
Not in education, training or employment			
- illness/ disability	10	12	18
- other reasons	22	22	24
- pregnancy or parenting	7	9	7
Total % who were not education, employment or training (NEET)	39	43	48
Local Authority does not have information	10	5	5

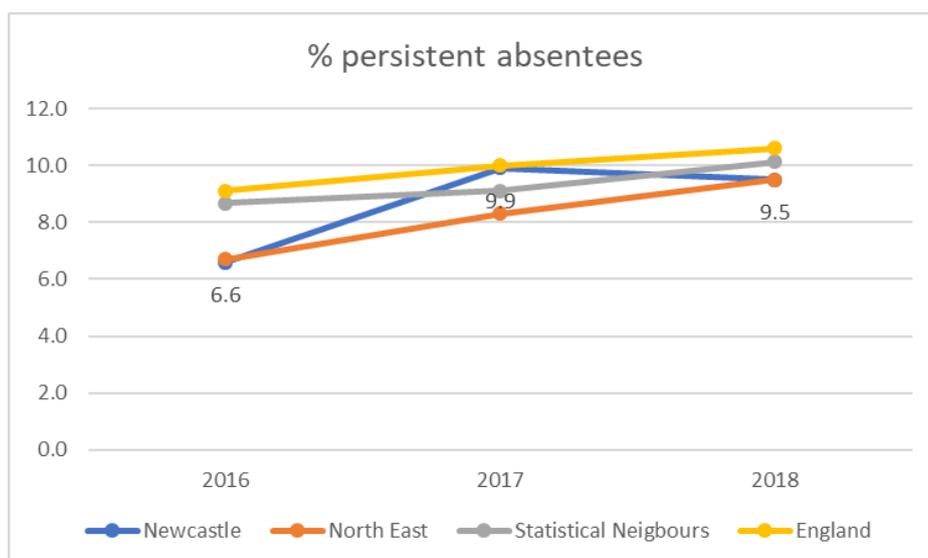
Attendance and Exclusion

How well do our young people attend school?

The LAC overall absence rates in Newcastle (4.4%) were just below national levels (4.5%), the same as Statistical Neighbours and just above the North East (4.1%)⁵. Since 2016, absence rates for looked after children have risen in Newcastle, England and comparator areas. LAC absence rates are below that of all Newcastle pupils (5.3% in 2018).

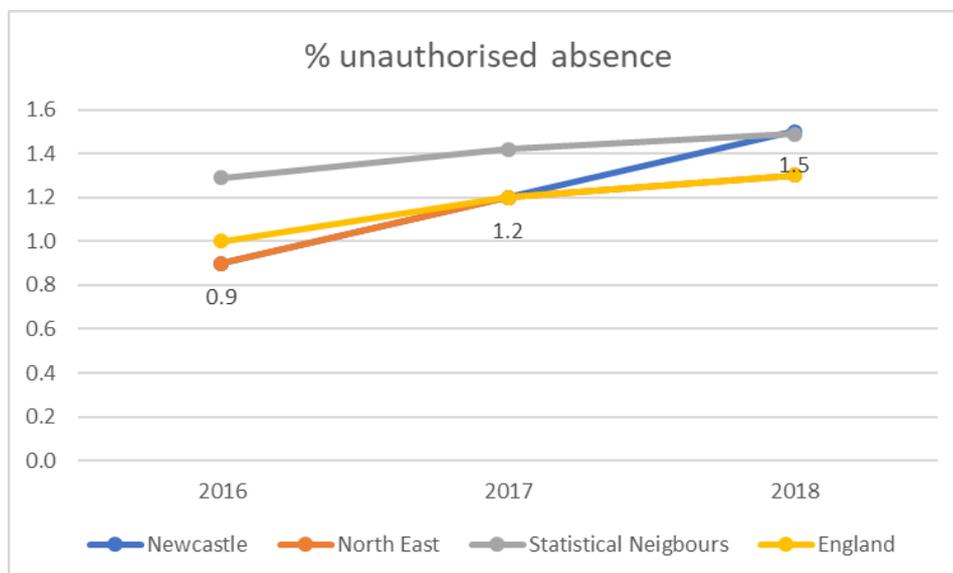


9.5% of looked after children were classed as persistent absentees in 2018, compared with 10.6% nationally, 10.1% for Statistical Neighbours and the same as the North East average. LAC persistent absence rates are lower than for all Newcastle pupils (13.3% in 2018).



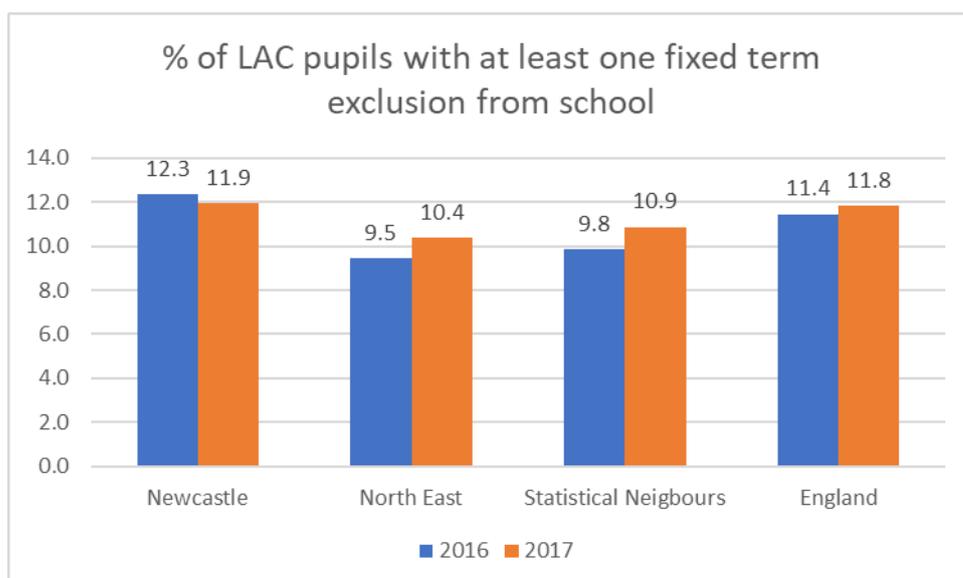
⁵ Source: Outcomes for children looked after by LAs: 31 March 2018

In Newcastle, 1.5% of LAC absences were unauthorised. This is the same as statistical and North East Neighbours compared with 1.3% nationally. The trend since 2016 suggests unauthorised absences for LAC pupils is increasing.



How many of our young people have been excluded?

In 2017-18 1.9% of Newcastle looked after children had at least one fixed term exclusions from school⁶. This was just above the national average (11.8%) and above both the North East (10.4%) and Statistical Neighbour (10.9) averages. The Newcastle rate has reduced since the previous year (12.3%) whilst national and comparator areas have increased over the period.



⁶ Source: Outcomes for children looked after by LAs: 31 March 2018

Admissions, transitions and out of authority placements

How many children moved school mid-year?

Academic Year	School Moves	% of virtual school who moved school
2016/17	78	19.64%
2017/18	134	33.75%

The virtual school will challenge schools to avoid managed moves between education establishments; or advise placement panel when a school place should be maintained

If a move is appropriate the virtual school will work closely with the admissions team to ensure that any transfers are carried out in a timely manner. Any transition work will involve the Education Achievement Worker to manage what can be a challenging time for LAC.

Out of Authority Placements

60% of LAC students were educated in Newcastle schools and the remainder in schools outside of Newcastle.

Personal Education Plans ((PEP), (PP+) and Academic Progress

How does the virtual school ensure the quality of the PEPs?

The PEP is a dynamic document that sets out clear targets for the student and actions for staff. Once an initial assessment has been made the first PEP will be completed in three months prior to the second LAC review.

The PEP is reviewed every six months following entry into care.

What information does the PEP record?

PEPs hold a range of information that is held on a central education data base. This includes attendance, exclusions and attainment data that can be pre-populated onto the plan following entry into care.

The PEP also records the views of school, social care, carers and the young person.

What is the quality of the PEPs?

In Newcastle the communication and co-ordination of the PEP process is the responsibility of the Education Achievement Worker who ensures that the process undertaken on schedule, with an appropriate level of challenge to all parties.

It is the role of the Virtual School Headteacher to monitor the quality of the service and the individual PEP. This responsibility was delegated to the virtual school by Childrens Social Care.

How do we distribute pupil premium plus funding?

Once a child is registered in care for a 24-hour period they are granted £2300 a year from the DfE. The virtual school received these funds in three payments.

The Newcastle school forum has agreed that in 2017/18 that £800 should be retained centrally by the virtual school.

The remaining funds are distributed to school in termly amounts of £500 to support identified targets in each CLA personal education plan.

What was the centrally held budget spent on?

The Monitoring and tracking of each child's educational achievement is co-ordinated by an Educational Achievement Worker (EAW).

Training for EAWs in order to support schools and settings with specialist knowledge

Additional 1:1 tuition outside of school for specific pupils where a school has gone above and beyond what they are expected to do for a non-LAC student..

Training for Designated Teachers and Social Workers.

1 day per week of Educational Psychologist time.

Funding of alternative provision for the most vulnerable CLA.

Tuition for CLA who are not in education when at crisis point.

Work experience programmes for Years 10 and Y11 (Teenagers to Work).

Enrichment, Unleashing Aspiration and Celebration.

Teenagers to Work (T2W)

Teenagers to Work is a work experience programme for our Y10 and Y11 LAC and has been running for 11 years. Young people are offered a highly supported work experience placement to suit their needs.

Year Group	No of applicants	Offered placement	Completed programme
10	13	12	7

11	24	19	17
12	6	5	5
All	43	36	29

An increase in applications from the previous academic year from 32 to 43 young people applied for T2W. all young people who completed the week received a training allowance (£10 per day)

Feedback from the young people with completed the week was positive, and the celebration event was enjoyed by all.

Summary and Priorities for 2018/19

Against a background of rising numbers and uncertainty in leadership the students of the virtual school continued to demonstrate better than national data for comparator cohorts.

Attainment in Key stage 1 and Key Stage 2 improved on all areas compared to 2017 results. In Key stage 2 LAC pupils made more progress than their peers nationally in all 3 progress measures.

In Key Stage 4 attainment and progress rose and stayed in line with national data for LAC students. It is important to note that the rate of progress slowed in Key Stage 4.

Further investigation needs to be carried out into the attendance of Key Stage 4 students. It is important to understand the impact of exclusions, alternative provision and partial timetable upon this cohort's attendance. This information will allow the virtual school to identify especially vulnerable students and interventions to support them.

In 2018/19 the LA will carry out a full review of the virtual school to inform its development and to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The virtual school will.

- Continue to build on good attainment of students
- Focus upon Key Stage 4 attendance.
- Conduct a full review of the service by April 2019.
- Consider and implement recommendations.

