



Brent Virtual School for Looked After Children

Annual Report 2014/15

February 2016

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1. Purpose of the Annual Report

The purpose of this annual report is to outline the activity and impact of the Brent Virtual School during the academic year 2014-15. The report includes full details of the educational outcomes of our Brent looked after children. It reflects on the impact of our activities and identifies areas of future development to achieve improved outcomes for our looked after children.

Data contained in this report is for looked after children who were in the care of the Brent Council for the academic year 2014/15. It is un-validated data and includes all children in care in Brent in 2014/15; not just those in care for a year or more. The national LAC comparison data included in this report is from 2013/14¹. National, validated LAC data includes only children who have been in care for a year or more.

The Annual Report will be presented to the Corporate parenting Board on 16.02.2016.

2. Key Messages from the 2014/15 Data

- 40% of LAC in Brent in compulsory education in 2014/15 were in care for a year or less
- 20% of LAC in Brent were aged 15-17 years and 68% were aged 12-17 years
- PEP completion rates whilst much improved in 2014/15 require improvement in terms of their quality
- The Key Stage 1 (7 year olds) results were in line with the Virtual School's predictions. The cohort was small: 12 children; with 50% achieving the expected Level 2+ outcome in reading and writing and 58% (7 children) achieving the expected Level 2+ outcome in mathematics. These results were 13-21% below those of the 2014 cohort. The 2015 cohort had significantly more children with complex SEND needs. However the levels of progress were broadly similar
- The Key Stage 2 (11 year olds) results were much improved on 2014 with 100% (5 children) achieving Level 4+. This cohort, very different in characteristics from the 2013/14 cohort, were all resident in Brent, in stable placements, attending local schools. They have all made positive starts to their secondary education
- The Key Stage 4 (15 year olds) results were disappointing. Of a cohort of 37² only 5% (2) achieved 5A*-C incl. English and mathematics a further decline on 2014. These 2 LAC had been in care for less than a year and will not be counted in the national data. 41% (15) achieved 5A*-G, a significant improvement on 2014 and 78% (29) achieved at least 1A*-G. 8 achieved no GCSE or equivalent qualifications
- The post-16 EET data (in education, employment and training) is currently very positive: 91% are EET; the 4 young people currently NEET (not in education, employment and training) all are receiving support from the Virtual School's Life Coach
- The post-16 results show a decline in the number of LAC sitting AS and A2 examinations. Post-16 attainment is not currently being supported or monitored by BVS
- Attendance: 92%; 1% above 2013/14: a significant improvement
- Permanent Exclusion in 2014/15: 1 Year 8 LAC who was permanently excluded shortly after returning to care in May 2015. He is currently attending the Key Stage PRU in Brent and an application for a statutory assessment is being made. He is currently in

¹ From 2015 national attainment data for LAC will include information about SEND and will be produced for the first time by the DfE in March 2016. This Annual Report will then be updated accordingly.

² The actual 2014/15 Year 11 cohort was 46 of which 9 were EAL recent arrivals in the UK and were not eligible for GCSE entry. The EET data is based on the full cohort.

- a residential children's home
- Ofsted inspection of Brent services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children, October 2015 concluded that the work of the Brent Virtual School requires improvement. This was in line with BVS' self-assessment. Please see below in the report for more detail.

3. Role of the Brent Virtual School and the Virtual Headteacher

Role of the Brent Virtual School

The Virtual School in Brent (BVS) has the overall responsibility for the monitoring, supporting and provision of interventions to ensure that looked after children (LAC) achieve the best possible educational outcomes. BVS strives to achieve this by:

- Co-ordinating and quality assuring all Personal Education Plans (PEP)
- Monitoring and challenging schools to make effective use of Pupil Premium in line with DfE guidance
- Tracking the academic progress, attendance and exclusions of LAC
- Using tracking data to highlight individuals who are not on target to achieve their predicted outcomes and providing them with additional educational support.
- Ensuring Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) needs are identified and supported appropriately, including applications for statutory assessment
- Implementing a range of targeted interventions to raise academic standards
- Providing support and challenge to LAC, schools and carers, ensuring that expectations around achievement are high
- Ensuring effective transition between schools or specialist providers
- Encouraging LAC to have high aspirations about their futures and helping to remove barriers to further education
- Leading training for foster carers, designated teachers, school governors and bespoke training for alternative learning providers and staff in schools
- Encouraging LAC and their carers to engage in a wide range of enrichment activities
- Providing education updates for the Residential Panel
- Celebrating LAC achievements.

BVS was re-structured in 2013 and the size of the team was reduced in from January 2014; going from a team of 6: a lead advisory teacher (deputy head of BVS) and 5 advisory teachers to a team of 4: a lead advisory teacher (deputy head of BVS) and 3 advisory teachers. This has had a significant impact on the capacity of the team to support an ever increasingly complex caseload of LAC.

Role of the Brent Virtual Headteacher

The concept of the 'Virtual School Headteacher' for Children Looked After was first outlined in the White Paper 'Care Matters: Time for Change' (DCSF, June 2007). Directors of Children's Services have a statutory responsibility to make sure that their local authority promotes the educational achievement of the children they look after, regardless of where they are placed.

The Children and Families Act 2014 amended section 22 of the Children Act 1989 and placed a statutory duty on all local authorities to appoint a Virtual School Head (VSH) to promote the educational achievement of its Looked After Children. It is the responsibility of the Director of Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to ensure that these duties are met.

The VSH role in Brent Council is held by Janet Lewis³ and is a strategic role that can influence practice and the use of resources across the authority.

The role was expanded in the DfE document 'Promoting the Education of Looked After Children, statutory guidance for local authorities' July 2014. This document prescribes clearly that:

- VSHs are in place and that they have the resources, time, training and support they need to discharge the duty effectively
- VSHs have robust procedures in place to monitor the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after (including those placed and educated out of county)
- VSHs must maintain an up to date roll of their Local Authority's Looked After Children who are in school or college settings and gather information about their education placement, attendance and educational progress
- VSHs must inform headteachers and designated teachers in schools if they have a child on roll who is looked after by the VSH's local authority
- Ensure social workers, designated teachers and schools, carers and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) understand their role and responsibilities in initiating, developing, reviewing and updating each child's PEP (personal education plan) and ensuring that identified needs are met
- Ensure up to date, effective and high quality PEPs focus on educational outcomes and that all Looked After Children, wherever they are placed, have an effective PEP
- Ensure the educational achievement of children looked after by the authority is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibility for promoting their welfare.
- Report regularly on the attainment of Looked After Children through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

The BVS Headteacher is also a regular member of the borough's Fostering Panel.

4. Brent Virtual School Members

2014/15

Lesley Hobbs, Interim Headteacher (until December 2014)
Janet Lewis, Headteacher (from January 2015)
Maggie Taylor, Lead LAC Advisory Teacher (retired December 2014)
Susan Lofthouse, Interim Deputy Headteacher (01.04.15-31.01.16)
Priya Upadhyaya, LAC Information Analyst
Sara Thrower, KS4 LAC Advisory Teacher (left Brent Council August 2015)
Nayna Joshi, KS3 LAC Advisory Teacher
Margaret Curtin, KS1 and 2 LAC Advisory Teacher
Elizabeth Hannah, LAC Educational Psychologist
Ben Kwofie, Year 11 LAC Life Coach, Connexions Team.

2015/16

Janet Lewis, Headteacher
Susan Lofthouse, Interim Deputy Headteacher (01.04.15-31.01.16)
Priya Upadhyaya, LAC Information Analyst
Nayna Joshi, KS4 LAC Advisory Teacher
Anna Lewis, Interim KS4 LAC Advisory Teacher (until 30.03.16)
Margaret Curtin, KS3 LAC Advisory Teacher
Emma Gavin, KS1 and 2 and Early Years LAC Advisory Teacher
Elizabeth Hannah, LAC Educational Psychologist (0.6)

³ Janet Lewis is also the Head of the Inclusion and Alternative Education Service in Brent

Ben Kwofie, Year 11 LAC Life Coach, Connexions Team (until 30.03.16).

The Virtual School is governed by the Corporate Parenting Board and its Management Board chaired by the Operational Director for Early Help and Education.

During 2015 BVS made 2 attempts to appoint a substantive Deputy Headteacher without success. Appointing an outstanding Deputy Headteacher remains a priority for BVS.

Please see Appendix 3 attached to this report for an account of a typical day in the life of a BVS LAC Advisory Teacher.

Ofsted inspection of Brent services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children, October 2015

The Ofsted judgement for Brent of requires improvement was in line with BVS's self-assessment. The inspection report made the following specific comments and recommendations for BVS:

Comments

- Outcomes for children looked after in Brent are not yet good because services are not consistently meeting the needs of all children
- Measures aimed at improving educational attainment for children looked after are not yet improving outcomes across all key stages.
- The head of the virtual school has implemented a wide range of actions to improve the educational attainment of children looked after. Attainment gaps have narrowed at Key Stage 1 over the last three years and at Key Stage 2 in 2014–15 but despite initiatives to address them, they have continued to widen at Key Stage 4. The virtual school is targeting additional help and tracking children's progress, but the quality of personal education plans is too variable and too many children are underachieving, limiting their options for future education, employment and economic well-being.
- Previous problems with low completion rates for personal education plans have been resolved. However, while a minority are completed well, the majority require improvement
- The personal and educational achievements of care leavers and children looked after are recognised at an annual celebration evening and young people are proud of their achievements.

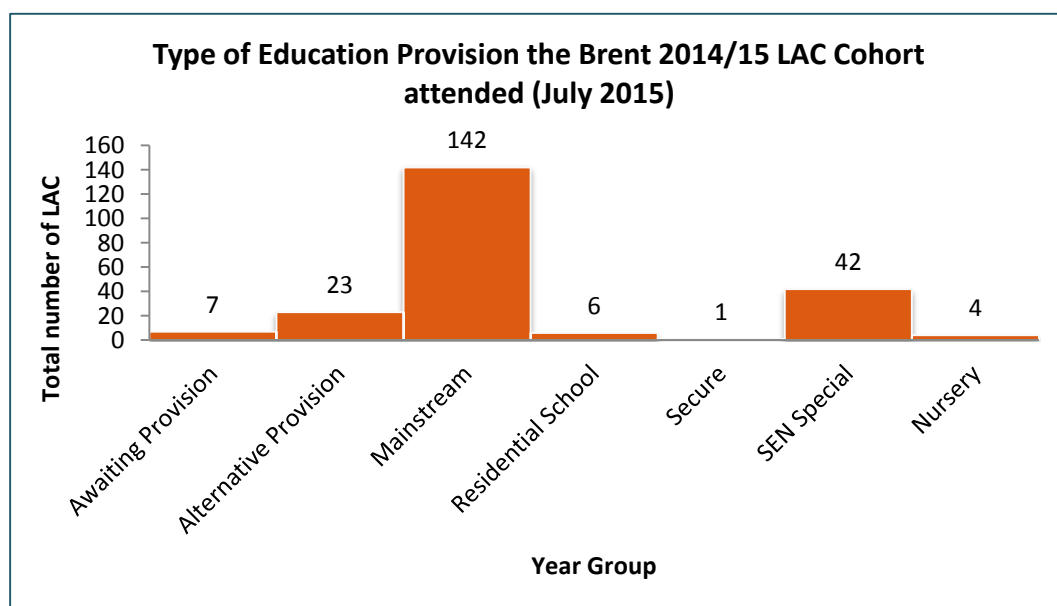
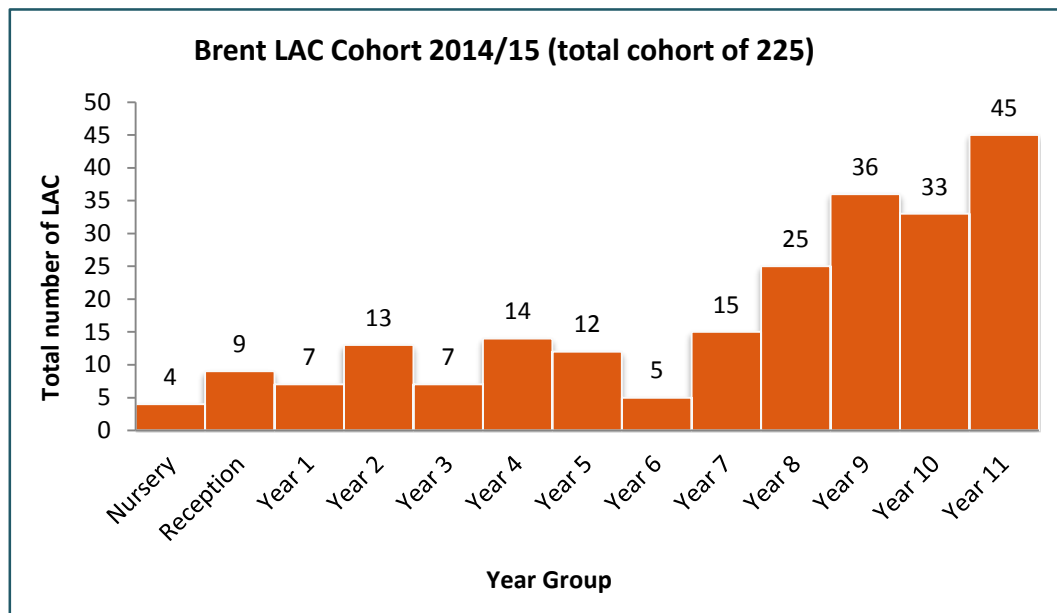
Recommendations:

- Ensure that children's plans, including personal education plans and pathway plans, contain clear and specific actions with timescales for completion
- Concentrate the work of the virtual school on measures to narrow the attainment gap across all key stages to build on the success achieved at Key Stage 1 in 2013–14 and at Key Stage 2 in 2014–15
- Work closely with training providers and careers advice and guidance workers to increase care leaver progression into apprenticeships and other vocational further education

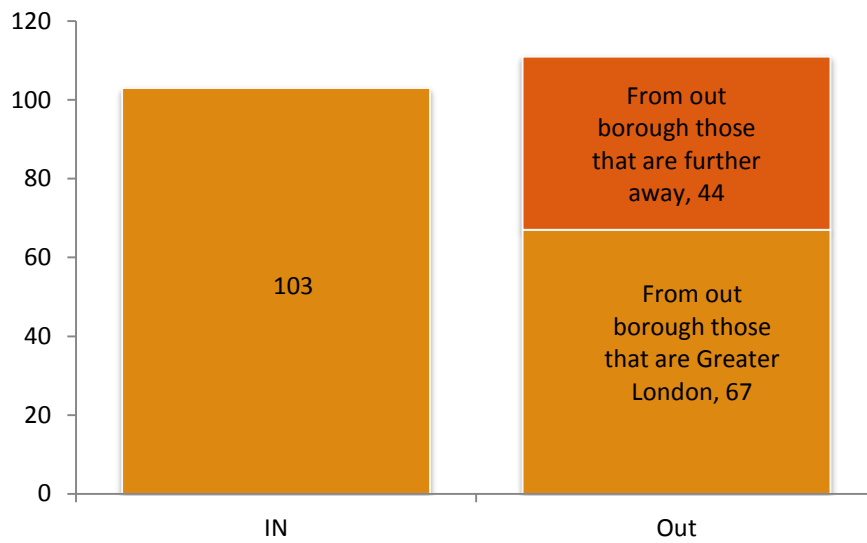
The recommendations are now part of BVS's current service plan.

5. Brent's Looked After Children Population 2014/15

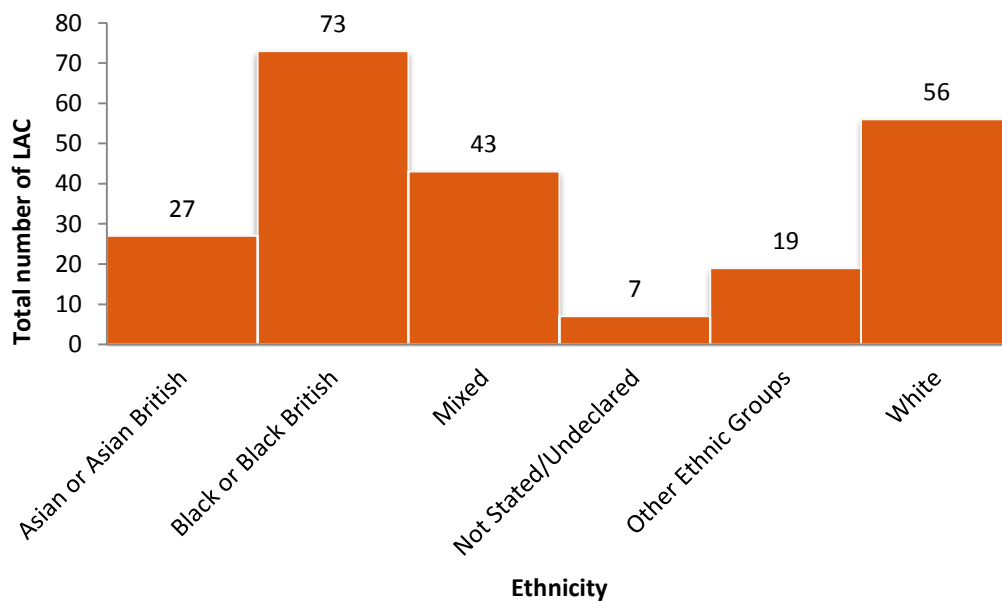
In July 2015 225 (Nursery- Year 11) children were looked after, 103 attending Brent schools and 111 attending schools outside the borough. Of these 111, 67 were in schools in greater London, with the remainder placed outside London, some at a significant distance.



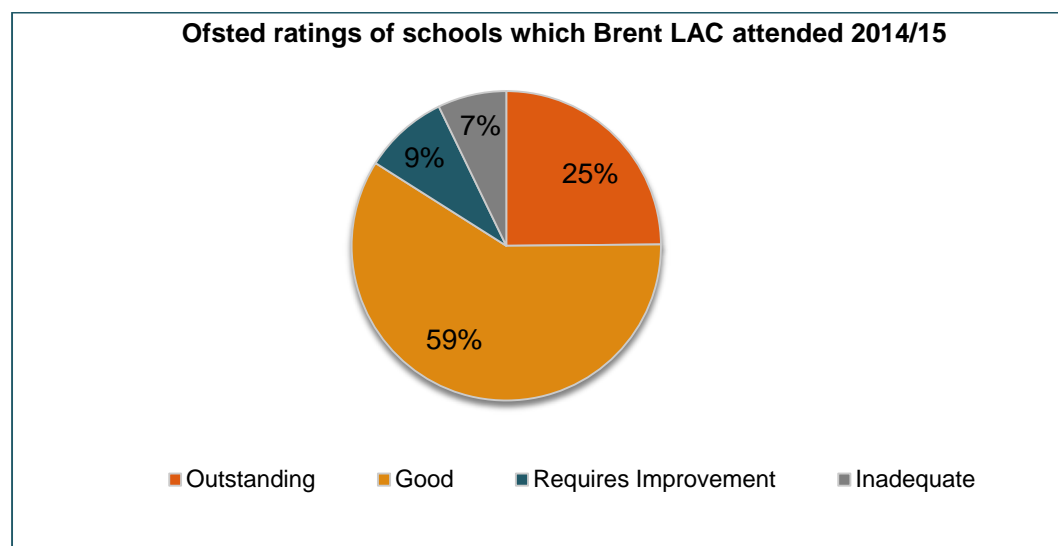
Brent LAC 2014/15 Proportion placed in/out Brent



Ethnicity of the Brent LAC Cohort 2014/15 (total cohort of 225)



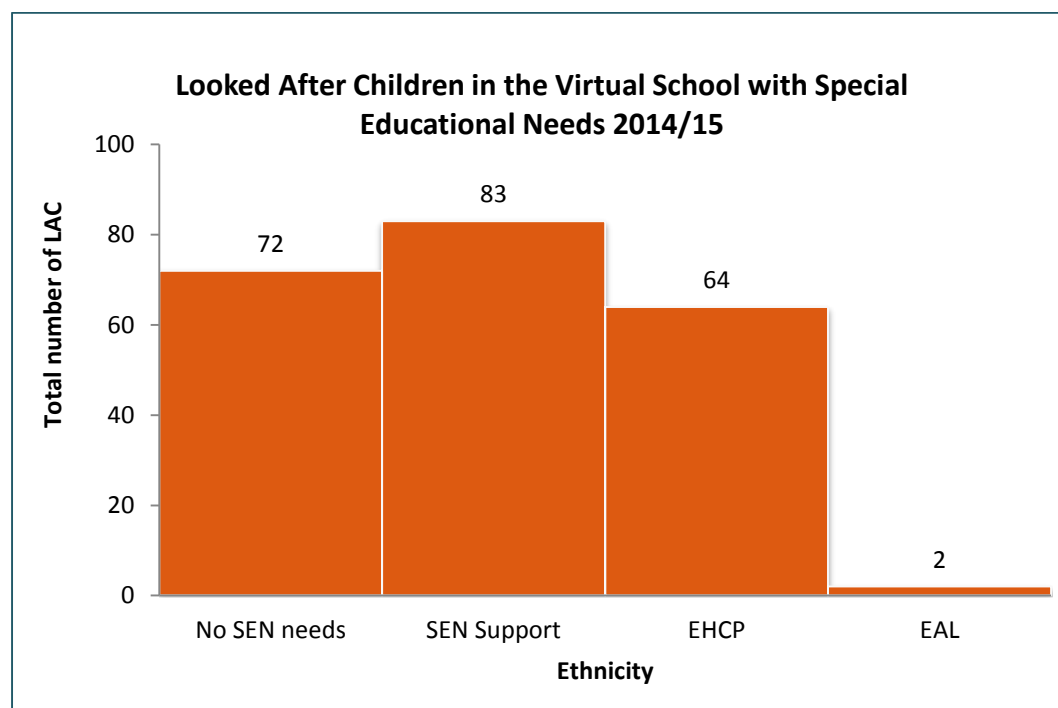
In 2014/15 84% of statutory school aged LAC attended schools that were Ofsted rated as good or outstanding, 9% (16 LAC) attended schools that required improvement and 7% (13 LAC) attended an inadequate school.



BVS monitors the progress and achievement of all LAC paying particular attention to those placed in schools that are less than 'good'.

6. SEND

65% of the 2014/15 LAC cohort had identified SEND needs compared with 12% nationally. 28% had Education Health Care Plan (EHC plan) compared with 3% nationally.



Please note that the above graph represents LAC in Reception- Year 11

7. Brent's Looked After Children's Attainment 2014/15

Monitoring and improving outcomes for Brent LAC is a key priority for the BVS and although LAC numbers are relatively small, national and regional comparisons allow an understanding of educational and other outcomes achieved for children for which Brent Council are responsible as the corporate parent. Outcomes are reported for LAC who have been continuously looked after for at least 12 months up to and including 31 March 2015. Data is collated from the annual LAC return (SSDA903) and matched to attainment and school census data⁴.

8. Early Years (Non Statutory) Provision 2014/15

In the summer term 2014, 4 LAC aged 2-4 years were eligible to access free early education. Of these 1 attended a Brent nursery provision, 2 pupils attended an out of borough nursery setting and 1 child did not attend nursery due to a severe disability. These 3 children are in receipt, since April 2015, of the Early Years Pupil Premium. BVS did not support or monitor LAC in Early Years settings in 2014/15. This important work started in September 2015.

2014/15 Statutory Attainment

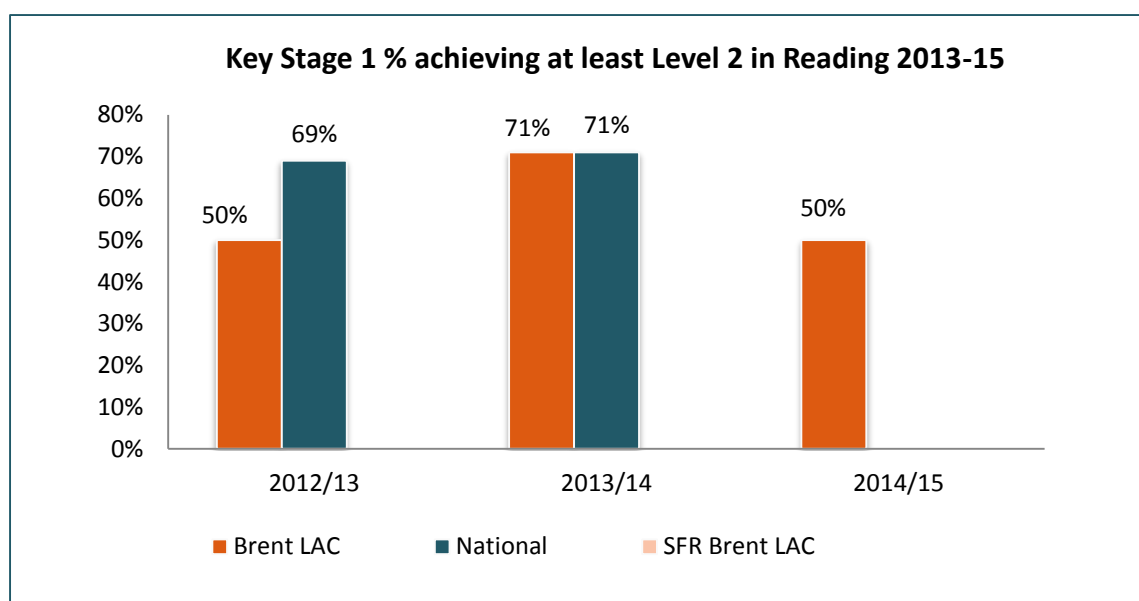
The attainment of the Year 2 (Key Stage 1), 6 (Key Stage 2) and 11 (Key Stage 4) cohorts in 2014/15 is set out below.

9. Key Stage 1 Statutory Attainment

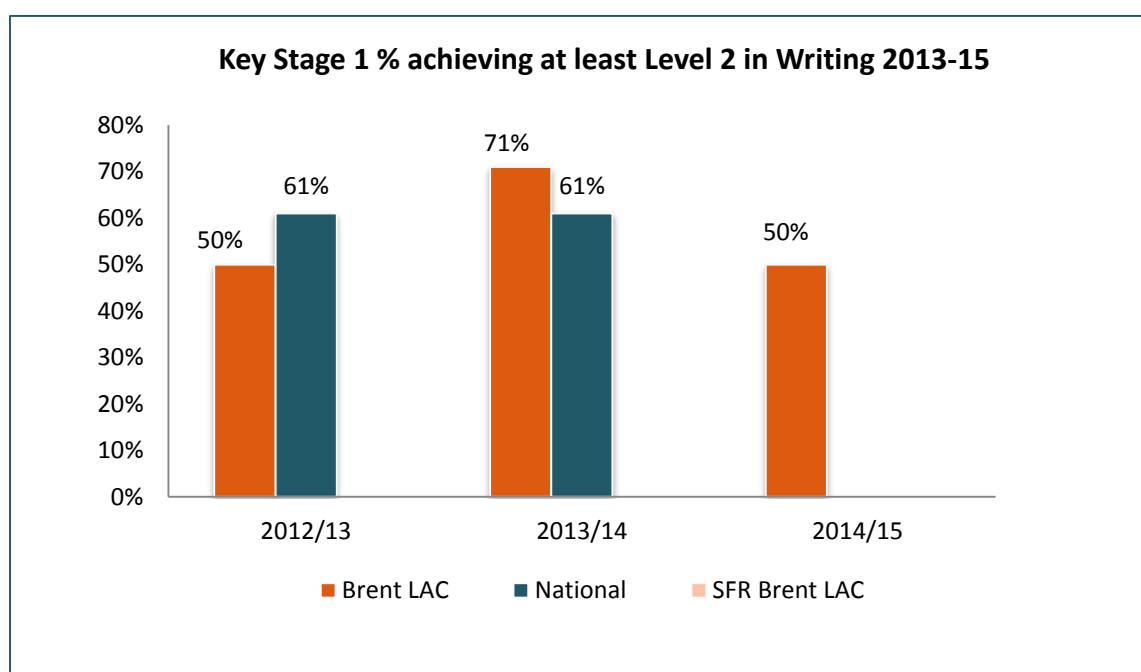
Attainment at Key Stage 1 declined in 2014/15 in all areas assessed.

In 2014/15, 12 LAC completed KS1. Results show that 50% achieved Level 2 in Reading, 50% in Writing and 58% in Mathematics.

⁴ The national data included in this report is LAC only. Care must be taken when interpreting this information due to the small number of children and the vulnerability of these cohorts.

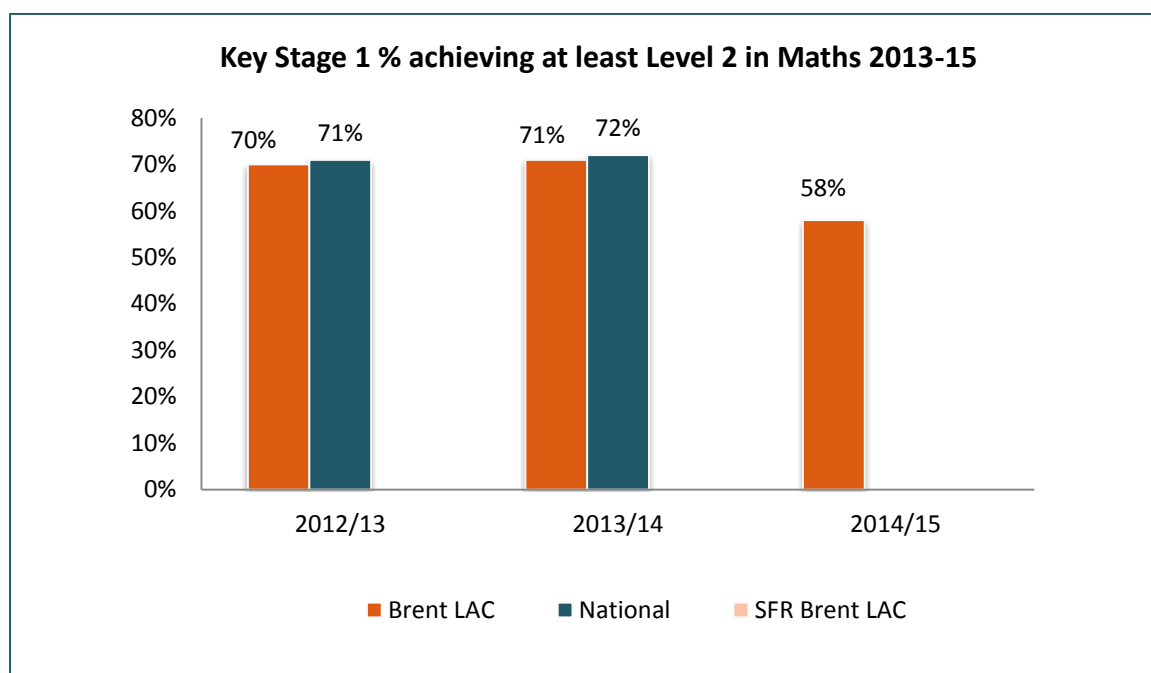


Reading Key Stage 1 % achieving at least Level 2	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number in LAC Cohort	10	7	12
Brent LAC	50% (5 Pupils)	71% (5 Pupils)	50% (6 Pupils)
National	69%	71%	TBC
SFR Brent LAC ⁵	x	x	TBC



⁵ Statistical First Release – verified data published by the Department for Education. In the case of LAC data only the outcomes of children who have been in care for at least 12 months are included in the SFR. Brent's LAC data includes all children in that Key Stage as of the end of the academic year.

Writing Key Stage 1 % achieving at least Level 2	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number in LAC Cohort	10	7	12
Brent LAC	50% (5 Pupils)	71% (5 Pupils)	50% (6 Pupils)
National	61%	61%	TBC
SFR Brent LAC	x	x	TBC

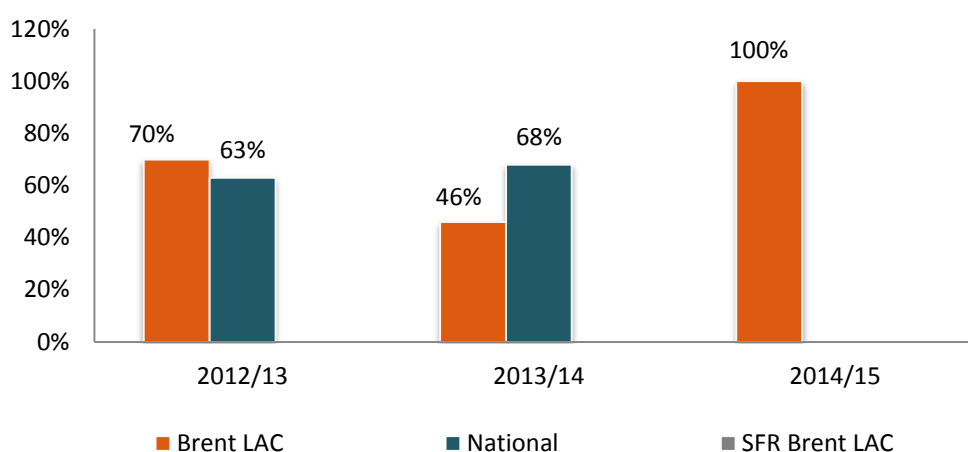


Maths Key Stage 1 % achieving at least Level 2	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number in LAC Cohort	10	7	12
Brent LAC	70% (7 pupils)	71% (5 Pupils)	58% (7 Pupils)
National	71%	72%	TBC
SFR Brent LAC	x	x	TBC

10. Key Stage 2 Statutory Attainment 2014/15

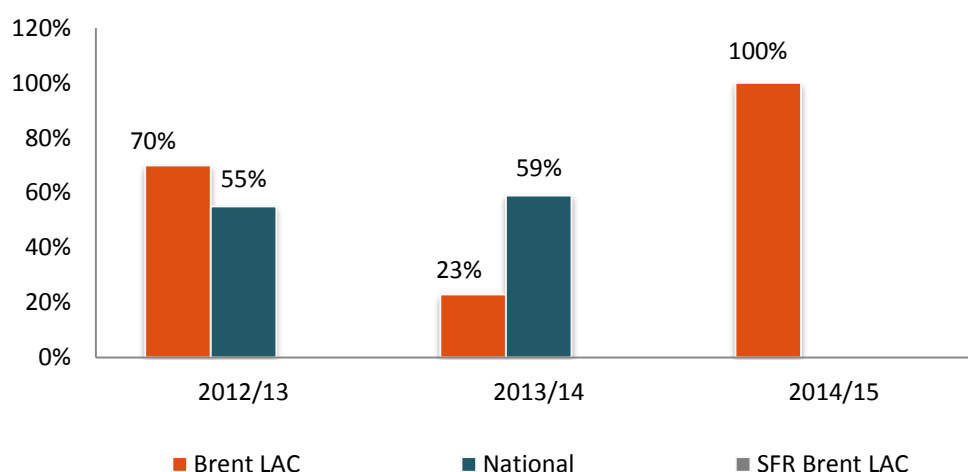
Results for the 5 LAC who completed KS2 show that 100% achieved L4+ in reading, writing and maths.

Key Stage 2 % achieving at least Level 4 in Reading 2013-15

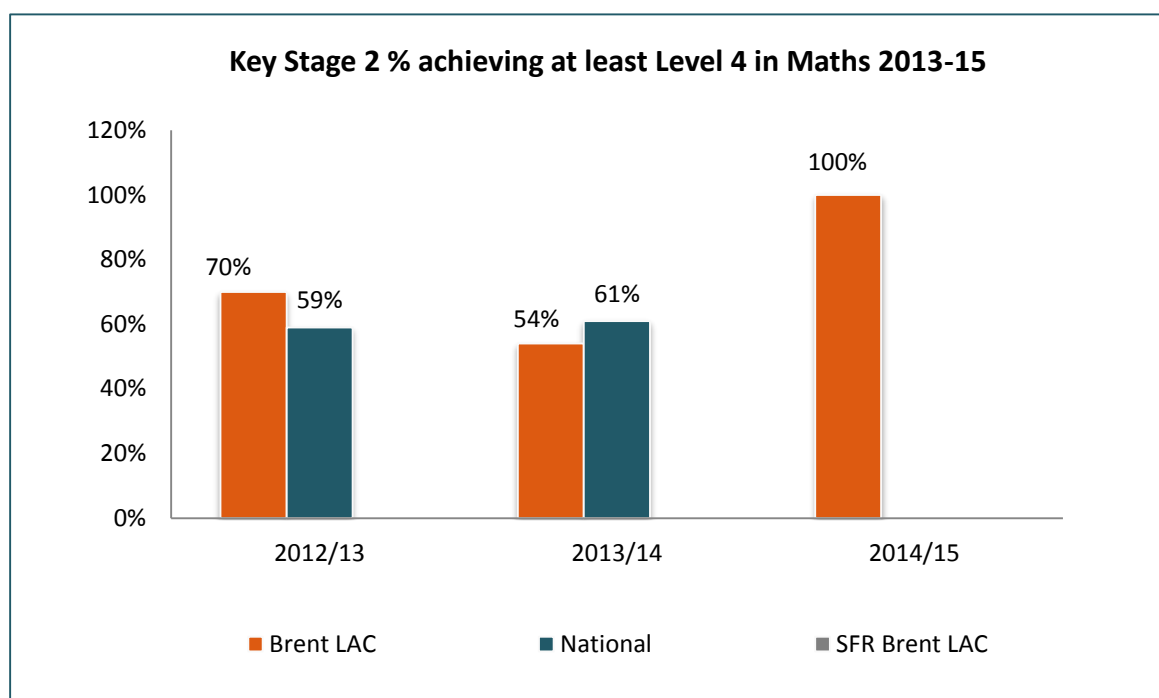


Reading Key Stage 2 % achieving at least Level 4	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number in LAC Cohort	10	13	5
Brent LAC	70% (7 Pupils)	46% (6 Pupils)	100% (5 Pupils)
National	63%	68%	TBC
SFR Brent LAC	x	x	TBC

Key Stage 2 % achieving at least Level 4 in Writing 2013-15



Writing Key Stage 2 % achieving at least Level 4	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number in LAC Cohort	10	13	5
Brent LAC	70% (7 Pupils)	23% (3 Pupils)	100% (5 Pupils)
National	55%	59%	TBC
SFR Brent LAC	x	x	TBC



Maths Key Stage 2 % achieving at least Level 4	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number in LAC Cohort	10	13	5
Brent LAC	70% (7 Pupils)	54% (7 Pupils)	100% (5 Pupils)
National	59%	61%	TBC
SFR Brent LAC	x	x	TBC

11. Key Stage 4 Statutory Attainment 2014/15

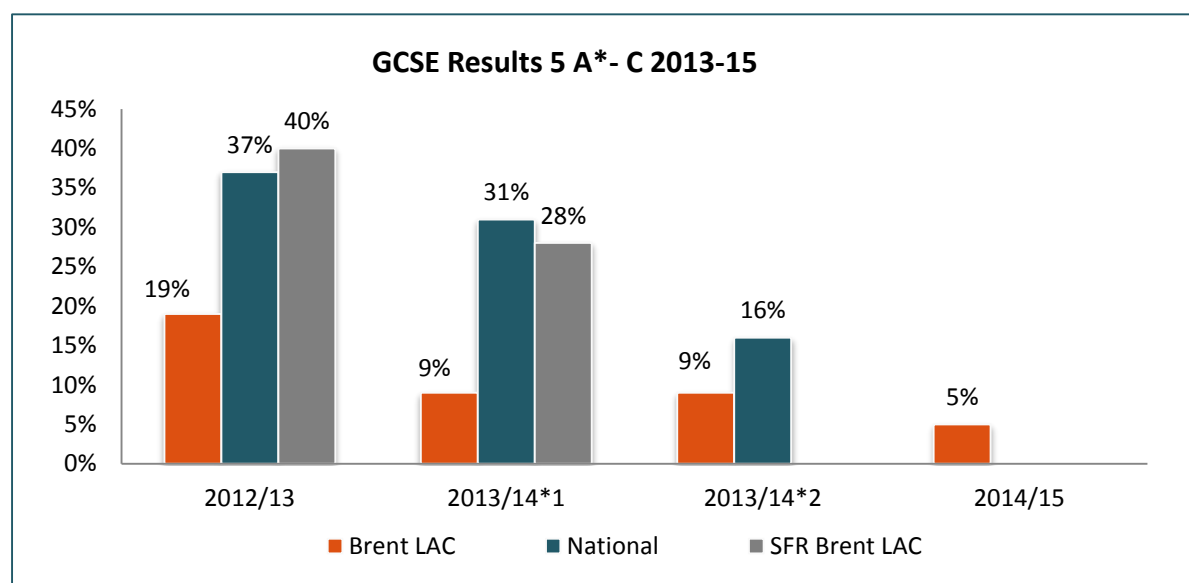
Attainment at Key Stage 4 in 2014/15 was disappointing. However the cohort faced a significant number of barriers to academic success (please see below). The eligible cohort consisted of 37 LAC.

GCSE Results	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	% (cohort)	% (cohort)	% (cohort)
5 A*-C	19% (8)	9% (3)	5% (2)
5 A*- C (incl. Eng & Maths)	19% (8)	9% (3)	5% (2)
5 A*-G	60% (26)	39% (13)	41% (15)
1 A*-G	77% (33)	85% (28)	78% (29)
Didn't sit/didn't pass GCSE exams	23% (10) ⁶	15% (5)	22% (8) ⁷
Total eligible cohort	43	33	37
Not eligible /EAL (less than 2 yrs)	4	6	8
Total Cohort	47	39	45

⁶ includes 4 EAL- if these 4 pupils were not included the % would be 14%

⁷ please note 4 pupils sat exams but did not pass and 4 pupils didn't sit

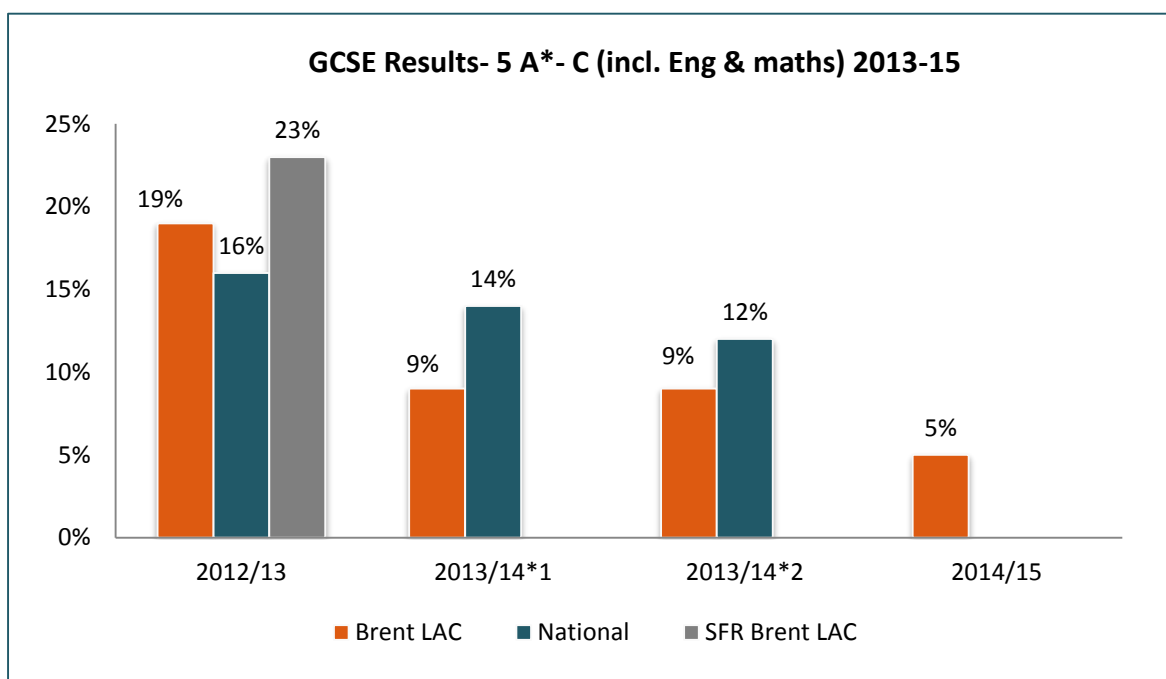
2 pupils achieved 5 A*-C GCSE including English and maths.



GCSE Results 5 A* - C	2012/13	2013/14 ⁸	2013/14 ⁹	2014/15
Number in LAC Cohort	43	33	33	37
Brent LAC	19% (8 pupils)	9% (3 pupils)	9%(3 pupils)	5% (2 pupils)
National	37%	31%	16%	TBC
SFR Brent LAC	40%	28%	x	TBC

⁸ The '2013 methodology' data removes the rules regarding the Wolf Review recommendations and early entry policy from the calculation of performance measures

⁹ New 2014 methodology applied to 2013/14 data. Two major reforms have been implemented which affect the calculation of key stage 4 (KS4) performance measures data. Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education recommendations which restrict the qualifications counted, prevent any qualification from counting as larger than one GCSE and cap the number of non-GCSEs included in performance measures at two per pupil. There is also an early entry policy to only count a pupil's first attempt at a qualification. More details can be found in the statistical release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provisional-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2013-to-2015>



GCSE Results- 5 A*- C (incl. Eng & maths)	2012/13	2013/14 ¹⁰	2013/14 ¹¹	2014/15
Number in LAC Cohort	43	33	33	37
Brent LAC	19% (8)	9% (3)	9% (3)	5% (2)
National	16%	14%	12%	TBC
SFR Brent LAC	23%	x	x	TBC

Please see below results for 5 A*-G and 1A*-G, which are not included in the SFR.

Brent LAC GCSE Results	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
5 A*-G	60% (26)	39% (13)	41% (15)
1 A*-G	77% (33)	85% (28)	78% (29)

Context and Impact on Outcomes

Why do different cohorts of LAC achieve such different outcomes from both other LAC and other children not in care?

¹⁰ The '2013 methodology' data removes the rules regarding the Wolf Review recommendations and early entry policy from the calculation of performance measures

¹¹ New 2014 methodology applied to 2013/14 data. Two major reforms have been implemented which affect the calculation of key stage 4 (KS4) performance measures data. Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education recommendations which restrict the qualifications counted, prevent any qualification from counting as larger than one GCSE and cap the number of non-GCSEs included in performance measures at two per pupil. There is also an early entry policy to only count a pupil's first attempt at a qualification. More details can be found in the statistical release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provisional-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2013-to-2015>

The educational attainment of LAC is measured against the educational attainment of all children. The majority of LAC face challenges and barriers to their overall achievement that the majority of other children do not. For example:

- 60% of LAC experience emotional and mental health problems: 4 times higher than children generally
- 66% of LAC have at least 1 physical health issue; are 3 times more likely to drink alcohol and/or smoke; 4 times more likely to take illegal drugs; more likely to become teenage parents
- Over 25% of LAC have an EHC Plan compared with only 3% of all pupils.

Brent's LAC reflect these national statistics. In addition the majority of Brent's LAC come into care between the ages of 11-16 at a time when the challenges faced by young people are more intractable and are more likely to result in placement breakdown and change of education setting.

In 2014/15 the Year 11 cohort was impacted by the following contextual issues:

- Prior Attainment: Only 9% (4 LAC) had achieved Level 5 in English and 7% (3 LAC) had achieved Level 5 in maths at Key Stage 2 – a key predictor for achieving 5A*-C including English and maths at GCSE
- Change of care placement: 73% experienced more than 1 change of care placement
- 62% of the cohort were educated in schools outside the borough
- Residential children's home: 20% were in a residential children's home for part or all of their Year 11 education
- SEND: 56% of the Year 11 cohort had the following SEND:
 - Identified SEND need: 27% (most commonly for emotional and behavior development needs)
 - EHC Plan: 29% (most commonly for emotional and behavior development needs)
- Attendance: 48% of Year 11 had attendance of 85% or less in the summer term of 2014/15
- Alternative Provision (a PRU or small setting): 31% were in an alternative provision for part or all of Year 11
- Time in care: 33% were in care pre Year 7 and 67% became LAC after Year 7.

All of the above challenges had an impact on how individual 2014/15 Year 11 LAC prepared for and performed in their public examinations. On the basis of prior attainment, only 3 of the cohort had achieved the expected levels at Key Stage 2 to secure 5A*-C grades including English and maths at GCSE. None of the 3 achieved 5A*-C grades. Of these 3, 1 had a baby in February 2015 and was out of school for 2014/15. She was supported by Brent's Inclusion and Alternative Provision Service and did sit some GCSEs in May 2015 with limited success. Another, following a care placement breakdown, was supported by BVS in travelling some distance to his school. His engagement following a period of non-attendance, improved and he did achieve 2 C grades at GCSE in maths and science. The 3rd LAC achieved 5A*-G GCSEs and has progressed onto college. Of the 2 LAC who did achieve 5A*-C grades including English and maths, 1 had achieved L4 at Key Stage 2 in English and maths and the other L2 in English and L4 in maths. Both came into care during 2014/15

BVS RAG rates and tracks all LAC including those in Year 11 paying particular attention to young people whose school and/or care placement is at risk and those who are underachieving. The support and intervention offered to the 2014/15 Year 11 LAC includes:

- Provision of additional 1:1 tutoring and/or mentoring
- Emergency PEP reviews
- LAC advisory teacher involvement at LAC reviews
- Home and school visits to engage with and advise individual LAC
- Support and training for social workers and foster carers

- Sourcing an alternative school place or alternative provision and providing support for transition.

The Advisory Teacher working with the 2014/15 Year 11 LAC cohort worked closely with colleagues in social care to address issues causing academic under performance.

Conversely the 2014/15 Year 6 cohort faced a far less severe level of challenge and the outcomes at Key Stage 2 were more positive:

- 60% had more than 1 change of care placement
- None were in residential children's homes
- SEND: 60% had SEN support at school but no child had an EHC Plan
- All were in Brent primary schools rated good or outstanding and all attended BVS Easter Revision Programme
- Attendance: all Year 6 LAC had attendance of 95%+
- 60% were in care for over 1 year.

A recent joint Policy Paper produced by the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), the national Consortium for Examination Results and the National Association of Virtual School Heads¹² made a number of recommendations and proposals to help minimise a number of important factors that impact negatively on LAC educational outcomes and which are too often associated with being in the care system. In particular it proposes that ADCS, the DfE and Ofsted should work together to develop a more comprehensive set of metrics and analyses to enable a better assessment of local authority and school performance, including the consideration of longer-term outcomes post-16, post-18 and post-25.

Another important research report produced by the Rees Centre¹³ into the educational progress of looked after children in England published in November 2015, points out that of all children in care those who are in care for the shortest periods do least well academically. Those in longer-stay care do better especially when compared with children in need (on the edge of care). Of the 2014/15 Year 11 LAC cohort only 33% had been in care for the whole of their secondary education.

BVS will be playing its part in bringing about such changes through joint working with the London Network of Virtual Heads and the new National Association of Virtual Heads.

Finally the comparison of year on year cohorts is particularly unhelpful. The Year 2, 6 and 11 Brent LAC cohorts vary tremendously from year to year; in some cases the LAC comprising one cohort might attend completely different schools from that of a previous year's cohort.

2014/15 Levels of Progress at Key Stages 2 and 4

BVS has begun to analyse the levels of progress made by LAC at Key Stage 2 measured against their starting points at Key Stage 1 and by LAC at Key Stage 4 measured against their starting points at Key Stage 2 using performance matrices. This work is in its early stages and BVS will publish details when the 2014/15 Annual Report is updated in April after the national data for 2014/15 is available.

Work on monitoring current LAC progress is also a key focus for BVS, using termly data drops collected by Welfare Call. Such monitoring is enabling us quickly to identify LAC at risk of under-achievement, to challenge schools and to work with the Designated Teachers in schools to provide appropriate individual support and adapt PEPs as appropriate.

¹² <http://adcs.org.uk/care/subject-results/educational-achievement-of-children-in-care>

¹³ <http://reescentre.education.ox.ac.uk/research/educational-progress-of-looked-after-children/>

12. Key Stage Five Attainment 2014/15

BVS does not currently have a dedicated post-16 advisory teacher resource. This was removed when the team was re-structured in 2013 going from a team of 6: a lead advisory teacher (deputy head of BVS) and 5 advisory teachers to a team of 4: a lead advisory teacher (deputy head of BVS) and 3 advisory teachers. The number of LAC has remained constant and the raising of the participation age by government to 18 has accentuated the need to ensure that post-16 LAC's educational progress is monitored and supported.

The attainment of Year 13 LAC in 2014/15 below is not complete. BVS needs the permission of each LAC to collect post-16 results from schools and colleges. The 2013/14 figures are provided for comparison.

AS Results	2013/14	2014/15
Total AS exams taken	26	23
Total AS number of passes A*-E	23	15
Total % of AS passes A*-E	88%	65%

A2 Results	2013/14	2014/15
Total A2 exams taken	13	9
Total A2 number of passes A*-E	13	9
Total % of AS passes A*-E	100%	100%

1 LAC completed the International Baccalaureate and achieved:

- English Literature Grade 5,
- Italian Grade 4,
- History Grade 4,
- Physics EE Grade C,
- Physics HL Grade 4,
- Chemistry Grade 3,
- Maths Grade- 2
- Theory Knowledge Grade C.

1 LAC took Level 3 in Health & Social Care and Level 3 in Performing Arts and achieved a distinction in both.

13. Destinations of LAC at 16+ and 18+

The education, employment and training (EET) status of LAC in the September following completion of Years 11 and 13.

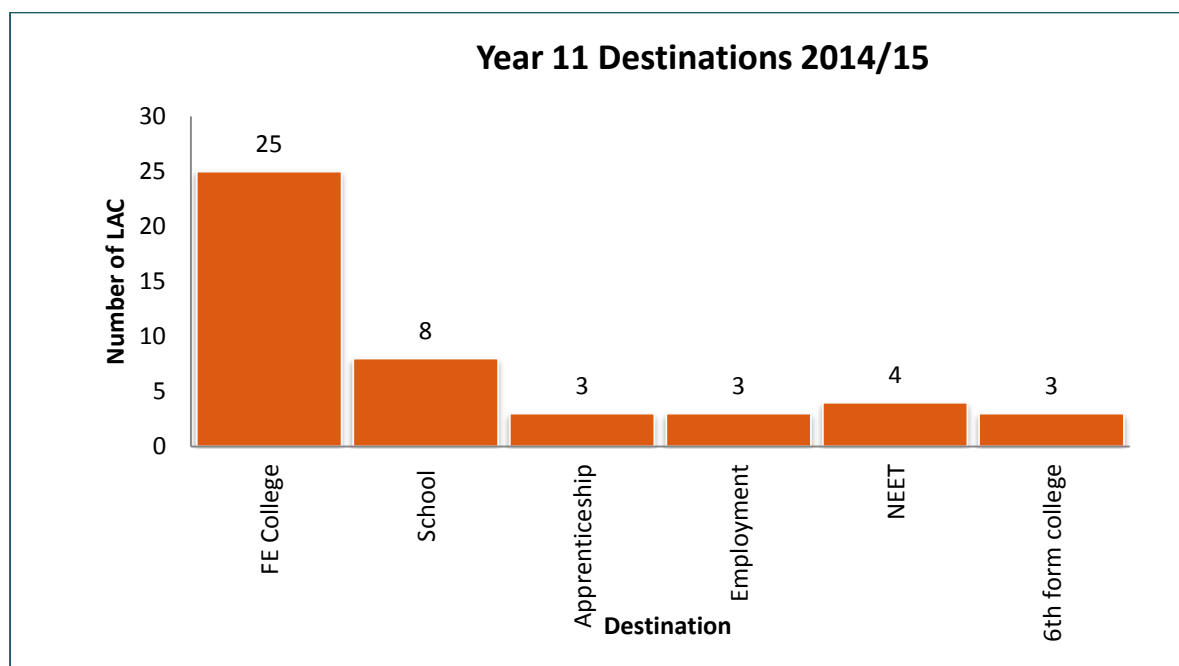
16+ LAC September Guarantees

Out of a total of 46¹⁴ year 11 LAC in 2014/15; 42 had September guarantees¹⁵. The graph

¹⁴ The actual 2014/15 Year 11 cohort was 46 of which 9 were EAL recent arrivals in the UK and were not eligible for GCSE entry. The EET data is based on the full cohort.

¹⁵ The September Guarantee is an offer, by the end of September, of a suitable place in learning to young people completing compulsory education. The Guarantee was implemented nationally in 2007 for 16 year olds and extended to 17 year olds in 2008.

below breaks this down into specific destinations.



The 4 LAC identified as NEET continue to receive individual support and guidance from the BVS Life Coach.

17+ and 18+ LAC Progression

2014/15 Year 12 and 13 destinations	Number of LAC	%
6th Form	19	14%
FE College/Provision	61	45%
Special School	7	5%
Training	3	2%
Apprenticeship	6	4%
Employment	1	1%
NEET	39	29%
Total	136	

14. Exclusions

1 Brent LAC pupil was permanently excluded in 2014/15. Fixed term exclusions were higher than in 2013/14 in terms of number of days lost to exclusion.

Please see below summary table for exclusions

Exclusion Data ¹⁶			
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total number of fixed term exclusions- days	183	190.5	253
Number of pupils excluded- fixed term	33	38	35
Total number of permanent exclusions	0	1	1

The 1 LAC permanently excluded in 2014/15 was in Year 8 and was excluded shortly after being taken into care. In 2014/15 a number of LAC were at risk of exclusion and 19% of KS4 LAC were directed to alternative provision to address their behavior by their mainstream school.

15. Monitoring Educational Provision and Attendance

Maintaining regular school attendance is fundamental to a young person achieving their potential at school. BVS recognises that monitoring LAC attendance is a key activity.

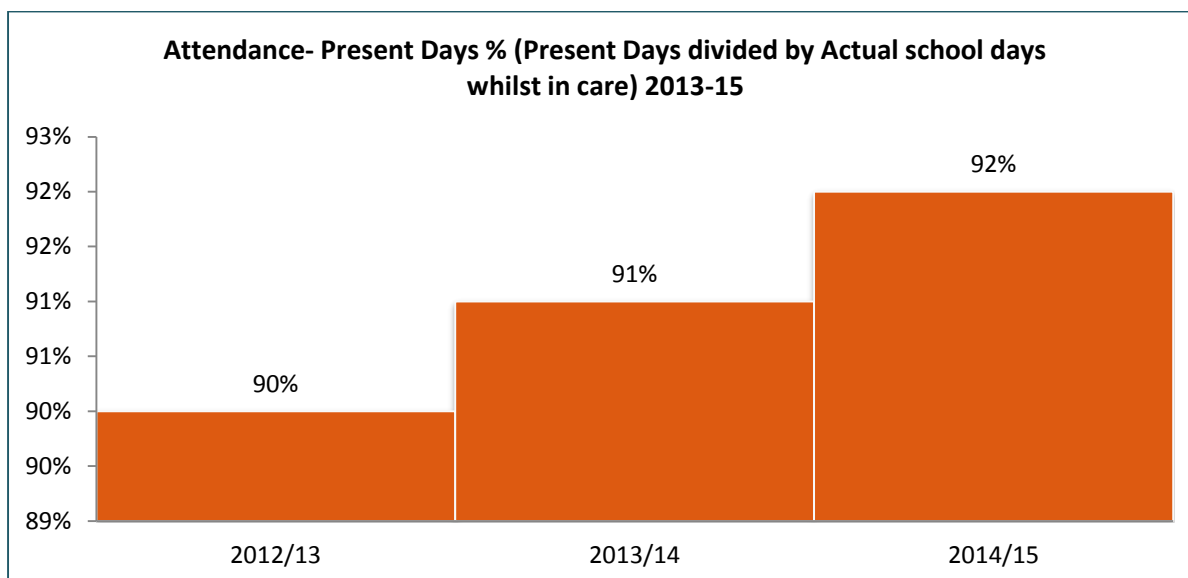
Since April 2012 the Welfare Call Service has been commissioned by the BVS to provide accurate data that enables it to monitor attendance, punctuality and exclusions for Brent LAC, wherever they live. The Welfare Call Service is used across the country by other local authorities and has an excellent track record in providing a variety of accurate attendance/exclusion reports and statistics on a daily basis.

An important aspect of the service is the daily call to each school attended by Brent LAC. Once an attendance issue is raised, the Welfare Call Service ascertains whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised and the type (e.g. medical, exclusion) as well as alerting both the social worker and the carer.

BVS is able to access regular datasets regarding young people's attendance at primary, secondary, special and residential schools across the country. Welfare Call reports are sent daily to BVS. If any unusual absences or significant concerns are noted, the relevant advisory teacher will send an alert to the social worker, their manager and any involved person, for further investigation.

Overall attendance for Brent LAC, although below national averages, has shown significant improvement over the past 3 years. However the overall figure can hide significant pockets of very poor attendance. For example a recent analysis of attendance undertaken by BVS shows that the poorest attenders are LAC in Year 11 where in the summer term 2015 48% (22 LAC) had less than 85% attendance.

¹⁶ Please note that the figures included above are collected by Welfare Call.



16. Pupil Premium Grant

The Pupil Premium grant (PPG) for Brent LAC (£1900pa per LAC) is managed by the BVS. BVS currently provides schools with £1300 per LAC; the £600 balance is retained for centrally funded support. Schools are asked to attach PPG spend to PEP targets and the expectation is that it will be spent, in the main, on 1:1 tuition. Schools can bid for the whole £1900; each bid is approved on its merits. In 2014/15 the retained balance funded the following BVS activity:

- Life Coach Ben Kwofie supporting Post-16 transition
- Easter Holiday and summer Half Term revision sessions for Year 6 and Year 11 LAC both in Brent and elsewhere
- Additional 1:1 tuition, mentoring sessions and additional support to a number of individual LAC who were not in school for a variety of reasons or were between schools due to foster placement changes.

The impact of PPG on LAC outcomes is variable. LAC report back that they value the 1:1 tuition they receive but too often this alone does not reverse a long history of low expectations and achievement. BVS works hard to hold schools to account for how LAC PPG is spent.

The impact of a Year 11 Life Coach, funded by PPG, has made a significant improvement to the current post-16 EET outcomes.

17. Training and Advice

The Virtual School staff group provide training sessions to:

- Designated Teachers (termly sessions)
- Foster Carers (bi-annually)
- Fostering Team
- Safeguarding Teams
- LAC Teams in schools
- Newly employed Social Workers.

The content of these training sessions includes, PEP and PPG processes, attachment disorders and strategies, school application and admission processes, expected roles and responsibilities.

During 2014/15 members of BVS provided the following training:

- EPEP training/Launch
- Care Planning Staff Forum Training
- Achievement for All joint Foster Carer and Designated Teacher Training
- PPG workshop at Governors' Finance Conference
- Brent Governors' Forum Training
- Foster Carer Training
- Social Worker Induction Training (repeated several times across the academic year)
- Social Care Staff Forum Training
- EPEP workshops for Social Care Staff
- Placements Staff Forum Update Training
- Designated Teacher Forum: Attachment and EPEP Training.

18. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

BVS has amended its PEP process in line with the DfE statutory guidance, 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children' (July 2014). BVS aims to review PEPs three times each academic year, and bring these in line with school assessments.

PEPs are statutory and when done well are a key driver of LAC education improvement.

During 2014/15 steps were taken to improve the completion rate of PEPs. The focus for 2015/16 is to improve the quality of the PEPs. The audit of PEPs completed as part of the 2015 Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, and review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in Brent, concluded that the quality of PEPs required improvement. BVS also conducted its own audit in November 2015 in order to more clearly understand the barriers to both timely completion and quality. From this snapshot of 195 PEPs the following was noted:

- 29% (58 PEPs) had incomplete attainment data
- Of this 29%: 36% (70 PEPs) had no English attainment data and 26% (50 PEPs) had no Maths attainment data.

Securing improvement in both completion and quality of PEPs is a key priority in 2015/16 for BVS. In particular this will involve the provision of further training for social workers and Designated Teachers. Regular audits will also better ensure consistency of quality PEPs. Please see below PEP analysis from February 2015 to July 2015.

PEP Overall Analysis		Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15
Total LAC of Statutory School Age (excluding those in secure/ YOI, and new)	Overview chart	195	200	206	208	210	214
Total Number of PEPs Outstanding (meeting hasn't occurred)		34	26	24	9	11	10
Total Number of Completed PEPS (meeting has occurred or is planned)		161	174	182	199	199	204
Outstanding PEP %		17.44%	13.00%	11.65%	4.33%	5.24%	4.67%
Current PEP Completion Rate %		82.56%	87.00%	88.35%	95.67%	94.76%	95.33%
Total number of PEPs uploaded		113	147	171	189	199	202
Total number of PEPs not uploaded		82	53	35	19	11	12
Current % of PEPs uploaded		57.95%	73.50%	83.01%	90.87%	94.76%	94.39%
Current % of PEPs not uploaded		42.05%	26.50%	16.99%	9.13%	5.24%	5.61%

Post 16 PEPS are conducted by the Social Care teams.

19. Celebrating Achievement

Each year BVS organises a celebration event for LAC and invites nominations to recognize the achievements of the children and young people. The event to celebrate achievement in 2014/15 was held on Friday 9th January in the Grand Hall in Brent's Civic Centre and was attended by over 200 people. Certificates and prizes were presented by the Mayor of Brent, the Cabinet Member for Education and the Strategic Director of Children and Young People in Brent. LAC's achievements were celebrated and a number of LAC took part in a special 'Brent's Got Talent' presentation. It was a joyful occasion.

20. LAC Enrichment

During 2014/15, BVS supported LAC in the following enrichment activities:

- The Letterbox Project – a literacy and numeracy project which promotes home learning. Feedback from pupils is very positive and foster carers report that receiving a book each month encourages greater interest in reading
- Enrichment Opportunities funded by the John Lyon's Charity.

Due to reduced permanent staffing in BVS in 2015 support for enrichment activities was limited.

21. Current Action Plan for Brent Virtual School

The post Ofsted Action Plan for BVS is attached as Appendix

The priorities for BVS in 2015/16 are:

- Secure substantive staff in the team
- Maintain the improved completion rate of PEPs
- Improve the quality of PEPs via regular audits
- Improve outcomes and progress at KS4
- Ensure LAC receive high quality CEG and maintain positive EET progression rates
- Identify a resource to support education of post-16 LAC

Janet Lewis
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February 2016.