



## Report to The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee

25 October 2012

---

**Report of:** Director of Inclusion and Learning Services

---

**Subject:** Education Outcomes for Looked After Children

---

**Author of Report:** Stephen Mather  
Head of the Virtual School for Looked After Children,  
[stephen.mather@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.mather@sheffield.gov.uk) Tel:0114 2506789

---

**Summary:**

The information presented has been requested by the Scrutiny Committee to enable it to scrutinise performance.

---

**Type of item:** The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	X
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	X
Other	

**The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:** consider this report and to provide views, comments and recommendations.

Be aware of the LAC attainment challenge for the City and the outcomes of summer 2012 assessments, tests and examinations.

---

**Background Papers:**

No background documents have been used to write the report. However some of the historic figures used in this report have been taken from Department for Education data sets.

**Category of Report:** OPEN



# EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

## 1. INTRODUCTION/CONTEXT

The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee have requested a report on the current picture on **outcomes for looked after children** to consider at their meeting on 25 October 2012.

The report contains details of the educational outcomes for Sheffield's cohort of Looked After Children (LAC) who were eligible for end of Key Stage assessments, tests or public examinations in summer 2012 (i.e. those children who were 7 years old, 11 years old, or 16 years old at the end of the 2011-12 school year).

## 2 HEADLINES FOR LAC ATTAINMENT AND ATTENDANCE 2012

### 2.1 Introduction / context:

- The cohort used by central government to measure outcomes of Looked After Children (referred to in this document as 'the reportable group') has changed three times over the last two years. Therefore caution should be exercised when making year on year comparisons.
- The statistics presented in this report are based on low numbers of children. Although they may indicate differences compared to previous results, the low numbers involved mean that caution should be exercised when comparing data, or making generalisations about cohorts.
- From 2010 onwards, the KS2 LAC cohort was based on the financial year cohort i.e. those children who had been in continuous care for 12 months in the year ending 31st March.

### 2.2 Key to terminology:

- Reportable cohort – this is the group of children who have been in continuous care for at least twelve months. It is the cohort which the Government uses to compare educational outcomes for LAC.
- Non reportable cohort – Other children who have not been in care for at least twelve months. The Government does not include their educational outcomes within the overall LAC attainment data.
- PEA – This is the Personal Educational Allowance which was formerly available for LAC to use to support their education.
- Pupil Premium – this is money which is included in the school budget and is linked to LAC. Schools should use this to support the education of the looked after child.

### 2.3 Overall summary

- The progress which the 22 LAC children made between start and end of Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics improved in 2012.
- The attainment of the 23 KS2 LAC in mathematics reached a five year high in 2012.
- The progress which the LAC students made between start and end of Key Stage 4 in both English and mathematics markedly improved in 2012.
- The percentage of the 46 LAC students who gained 5 good GCSE passes at grades A\*-G at age 16 continued to steadily improve in 2012.
- The percentage of the 46 LAC students who gained 5 good GCSE passes at grades A\*-C including both English and mathematics at age 16 improved in 2012, but remains low.
- Comparisons between years for Key Stage 1 children (age 7) is very difficult to make due to small cohort sizes between years.
- Year on year comparisons for all measures is difficult to make. The cohort used by the Government to measure outcomes of LAC has changed three times in two years.

### 2.4 Key Stage One (7 year olds) summary

- In 2012 there were 30 LAC in Y2 at the time of Key Stage One tests and of these 19 were in the reportable group.
- 20 LAC were in Foster placements. Five were placed for adoption, 3 LAC were placed with a relative/friend and two placed with parents

### 2.5 Key Stage Two (11 year olds) summary

- In 2011 there were 27 LAC in Y6 at the time of Key Stage Two tests and of these 23 were in the reportable group.
- At the time of the tests one child was placed in a specialist residential school, 18 LAC were in Foster placements, six were placed with parents and two were placed with a relative or friend.
- 32% of the cohort who took their SATs in 2012 were in care at the end of KS1.

### 2.6 Key Stage Four (16 year olds) summary

- In 2012 there were 59 LAC in Y11 at the time of GCSE and other public examinations and of these 46 were in the reportable group.
- At the time of the examinations 29 were in placements with 'other foster carers'; 17 were in 'homes and hostels'; the other 13 were a range of placements.
- 42% of the cohort who took GCSEs in 2012 were in care at the end of KS2 and 17% of the cohort were in care at the end of KS1

## 2.7 Key Stage 1 Headlines

Year	No. LAC	L 2+ Read	% L2+ Read	National	L2+ Writ	% L2+ Writ	National	L2+ Maths	% L2+ Maths	National
2008	17	8	47.1	54	6	35.3	47	9	52.9	59
2009	12	6	50.0	54	5	41.7	48	7	58.3	61
2010	12	7	58.3	58	7	58.3	51	8	66.7	62
2011	7	4	57.1	59	4	57.1	52	6	85.7	63
2012	19	10	52.6		7	36.8		11	57.9	

The profile of each cohort is important in order to fully understand their achievement. The 2012 Key Stage 1 Year 2 reportable cohort was the largest in the past five years and of the nineteen children in the Year 2 cohort, fifteen were placed in Sheffield Schools and four out of the City. Overall, ten children (52.6%) achieved Level 2+ in Reading and 8 of these were educated in Sheffield. Seven children (36.8%) achieved Level 2+ in Writing and six of these were educated in Sheffield. Eleven (57.9%) achieved Level 2+ in Mathematics.

The number of children in the cohort this year was 19, a more statistically reliable cohort size compared with 2011 (7) and 2010 (12). Therefore, as explained in the notes at the beginning of this paper, comparison with results for previous years is not necessarily indicative of worse (or better) performance.

It should be noted that in both 2010 and 2011, all Sheffield KS1 outcomes were suppressed in DfE publications due to low numbers,

## 2.8 KS1 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L2+ Reading

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	47.1	50.0	58.3	57.1	52.6
City Actual (%)	80.3	80.6	80.3	81.7	82.8
Difference between LAC and City	-33.2	-30.6	-22.0	-24.6	-30.2

In 2012 the gap between Key Stage 1 outcomes for LAC and the Sheffield average for all children, Year 2 outcomes in Level 2+ Reading widened by 5.6%, compared to 2011.

## 2.9 KS1 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L2+ Writing

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	35.3	41.7	58.3	57.1	36.8
City Actual (%)	76.7	77.4	76.5	77.9	79.8
Difference between LAC and City	-41.4	-35.7	-18.2	-20.8	-43

In 2012 the gap between Key Stage 1 outcomes for LAC and the Sheffield average for all children, Year 2 outcomes in Level 2+ Writing widened by 22.2%, compared to 2011.

## 2.10 KS1 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L2+ Mathematics

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	52.9	58.3	66.7	85.7	57.9
City Actual (%)	86.7	86.5	85.4	86.6	87.6
Difference between LAC and City	-33.8	-28.2	-18.7	-0.9	29.7

In 2012 the gap between Key Stage 1 outcomes for LAC and the Sheffield average for all children, Year 2 outcomes in Level 2+ widened by 28.8% compared to 2011.

## 2.11 KS1 non reportable LAC cohort

There were an additional ten children who were Looked After at the time of the tests, but were not in the reportable group due to them newly coming into care. Their results were as follows;

Year	No. LAC	L 2+ Read	L2+ Writ	L2+ Maths
2012	10	6	5	6

## 2.12 Key Stage 2 Headlines

Year	No. LAC	L 4+ Eng	% L4 Eng	National	L4+ Maths	% L4 Maths	National	L4+ Combined	% L4 combined	National
2008	26	8	30.8	46	5	19.2	44	5	19.2	-
2009	14	2	14.3	45	0	0.0	43	0	0.0	35
2010	21	8	38.1	46	8	38.1	45	6	28.6	37
2011	24	10	42.0	50	9	38.0	48	9	38.0	40
2012	23	9	39.1		10	43.5		7	30.4	

Note: In 2012, there was no 'writing' test. The English level is based on a combination of a reading test and a teacher assessment in writing. Results for one child are also still outstanding. In 2010, 7 children were discounted as they attended schools that boycotted the test.

The profile of each cohort is important in order to fully understand their achievement. In 2012 there were 23 children in the Key Stage 2 Year 6 reportable cohort. Of the 23 children in the Year 6 cohort, 16 were placed in Sheffield Schools and seven out of the City. Of the 23 children in the, Year 6 cohort, 16 were on the Special Educational Needs registers: four had Statements; eleven were at School Action Plus and one was at School Action.

Nine children (39.1%) achieved Level 4+ in English and this is only one child lower than in 2011. Of the sixteen children educated in Sheffield 6 (37.5%) achieved Level 4+ in English. Ten children (43.5%) achieved Level

4+ in Mathematics and this represents the highest achievement in the last five years; seven of these were educated in Sheffield.

Seven children achieved level 4+ in both English and mathematics combined and four of these were educated in Sheffield. While the percentage of children achieving both English and mathematics combined is slightly less than last year's figure (30.4%), of the five children who achieved L4+ in either English or mathematics, all made two levels progress and all registered a level 3 in the other subject.

While data for one child remains outstanding, this year's performance compares well with previous years. Performance in mathematics is at a 5 year high of 43.5% and the English result is similar to last year's performance at 39.1%.

Performance against predicted achievement showed good correlation. For English, of ten children predicted to achieve L4+, eight achieved this level, results for one child are outstanding and one achieved level 3. Similarly, nine out of eleven children achieved their predicted outcomes for mathematics with the remaining children achieving level 3.

### 2.13 KS2 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L4+ English

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	50.0	66.7	48.3	56.0	
LAC Actual (%)	30.8	14.3	38.1	44.0	39.1
City Actual (%)	76.7	75.8	76.9	76.7	81
Difference between LAC and City	-45.9	-61.5	-38.8	-32.7	-41.9

The gap between Key Stage 2, Year 6 outcomes in English Level 4+, is wider this year than in the past two years although still shows a significant improvement on the result in 2009.

### 2.14 KS2 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L4+ mathematics

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	50.0	61.9	48.3	56.0	
LAC Actual (%)	19.2	0.0	38.1	40.0	43.5
City Actual (%)	75	75.6	78.7	77.6	82
Difference between LAC and City	-55.8	-75.6	-40.6	-37.6	-38.5

The gap between Key Stage 2, Year 6 outcomes in Mathematics Level 4+ is broadly the same as last year in spite of the improved outcome.

### 2.15 KS2 LAC attainment and narrowing the gap at L4+ English and mathematics combined

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	19.2	0.0	28.6	40.0	30.4
City Actual (%)	67.5	68.3	70.4	70.0	76
Difference between LAC and City	-48.3	-68.3	-41.8	-30.0	-45.6

The gap between Key Stage 2, Year 6 outcomes in English and mathematics combined Level 4+, is wider this year than in the past two years although still shows a significant improvement on the result in 2009.

## 2.16 LAC KS2 reportable cohort - 2 levels progress from KS1 to KS2 in English and in maths (1 year trend)

Subject	2011		2012		2011-12 Difference	2011-12 Trend
	Number	%	Number*	%		
Reading			17	77.3		□
Writing			18	81.8		□
English	16	69.6	16	72.7	3.2	↑
Maths	10	43.5	18	81.8	38.3	↑
Discounted pupils	2		1			
<b>Total eligible pupils</b>	<b>23</b>		<b>22</b>			

\* data still outstanding for  
1 pupil

This is an important measure and it represents the progress which children should make between starting and ending Key Stage 2. It is expected that children should broadly make two full levels progress in both English and mathematics during this period.

Although overall LAC attainment was similar to 2011, the progress made by the KS2 cohort was significantly higher than last year. The percentage of pupils making 2 levels progress in English was 72.7%, a rise of 3.2% on 2011; in maths 81.8% of pupils made expected progress a rise of 38.3%. The figures for 2011 have been reworked using current methodology to enable accurate comparison.

For 2012, expected progress levels for reading and writing are 77.3% and 81.8% respectively. Insufficient data is available for the 2011 cohort to enable comparison.

## 2.17 KS2 non reportable LAC cohort

There were an additional four children who were Looked After at the time of the exams, but were not in the reportable group due to them newly coming into care. Their results were as follows;

Year	No. LAC	L 4+ Eng	L4+ Maths	L4+ Combined
2012	4	3	2	2

## 2.18 KS2 2011-12 Interventions/Additionality offered

A range of strategies have been used by schools to improve the learning of LAC. Some of these strategies are outlined below:

- Schools have used PEA to provide additional tuition in Y5 and Y6.



- In some cases the Virtual School has also commissioned support to be delivered by the school.
- Letterbox for Years 3,5,7. (Letterbox is a national programme that is aimed at raising the literacy skills and wider educational attainment for Looked After Children. It has been running for some years and is targeted at particular year groups. These have been Year 3 and Year 5. From 2012 the programme has been extended to include Year 7 (first year in secondary) for the first time. The children who are part of the Letterbox programme receive books and other educational items – games, puzzles, quizzes etc every month from May until October.)
- Study support for Year 6 every Thursday on a fortnightly basis (Bannerdale)
- Nine week (one night per week) creative writing project hosted by Hallam University.
- Two day filming and animation project
- Two year Children’s University Fellowship project offered from Year 5 (alternate Saturday mornings)
- Actively encouraging carers and schools to include LAC in out of core school hours activities, increasing their engagement and reducing isolation
- Additional funding for schools to target all Y6 and Y5 LAC in order to increase support and intervention programmes.
- Pupil premium e.g. 1:1 tuition, Play therapy or Additional in class support

## 2.19 Key Stage 4 headlines

Year	No. LAC	5 A*-C	% 5 A*-C	National	5 A*-C (EM)	% 5 A*-C (EM)	National	5 A*-G	% 5 A*-G	National
2008	58	11	19.0	13.9	7	12	-	25	43.1	43.4
2009	56	5	8.9	20.9	3	5.4	9.7	24	42.9	-
2010	56	12	21.4	26.6	3	5.4	11.7	24	40.0	-
2011	49	10	20.4	31.2	2	4.1	12.8	24	49.0	-
2012	46	10	21.7		4	8.7		24	52.2	

1. Children looked after continuously for at least twelve months excluding children in respite care.

2. Number of children based on those aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August

“-“ denotes where data not available or suppressed by DfE due to low numbers

Measure	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011-12 trend	2010-12 trend	2009-12 trend
English and Maths			x	8.7			
5A*-C with E & M	x	x	4.1	8.7	□		
5A*-C	20.8	22.6	20.4	21.7	□	□	□
5A*-G	45.0	47.2	49.0	52.2	□	□	□
1A*-G	75.0	71.7	75.5	67.4	□	□	□
Any Pass	83.0	81.1	81.6	82.6	□	□	□

It is important to understand the context of the cohort in order to gauge their achievement.

In 2012 there were 46 young people in the Key Stage 4 Year 11 reportable cohort. Of these 46 young people in the Year 11 cohort, 30 were placed in Sheffield schools and sixteen out of the City. 41 were on Special Educational Needs registers: 13 had full statements; 19 were at school action plus; nine were at school action. Nine young people were not entered for any GCSE exams, due to their complex needs and circumstances. Five LAC were in secure units of within the youth offending custodial system

## 2.20 Narrowing the gap at KS4 attainment at 5A\*-C

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	12.3	No statutory targets set			
LAC Actual (%)	19.0	8.9	20.0	18.4	21.7
City Actual (%)	57.8	63.5	75.1	71	77
Difference between LAC and City	-38.8	-54.6	-55.1	-52.6	-55.3

The gap between LAC and whole city outcomes at 5A\* - C widened this year in spite of the improvement in result.

## 2.21 Narrowing the gap at KS4 attainment at 5A\*-C (English and maths)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	5.3	20.3	16.1	20.0	
LAC Actual (%)	12.1	5.4	5.3	4.1	8.7
City Actual (%)	40.8	44.6	49.2	49.2	55.4
Difference between LAC and City	-28.7	-39.2	-43.9	-45.1	-46.7

The gap between LAC and whole city outcomes at 5A\* - C including English and mathematics has widened this year in spite of the improvement in result.

## 2.22 Narrowing the gap at KS4 attainment at 5A\*-G

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LAC Target (%)	No statutory targets set				
LAC Actual (%)	44	45	47.2	49	52.2
City Actual (%)	89.2	91.2	92.8	89.5	93.2
Difference between LAC and City	-45.2	-46.2	-45.6	-40.5	-41

The gap between LAC and whole city outcomes at 5A\*- G has widened this year in spite of the improvement in result.

## 2.23 KS4 progress - 3 levels progress in English and maths

Subject	2010/11			2011/12			2011-12 difference
	No. included	No. 3 lvl prg	% 3 lvl prg	No. included	No. 3 lvl prg	% 3 lvl prg	
English	44	6	13.6	44	11	25.0	11.4
Maths	43	5	11.6	45	12	26.7	15.0

This is a really important measure as it represents the progress which students made between starting secondary school in Year 7 and ending

Year 11. It is expected that all students will make at least three levels progress in both English and mathematics during this period.

Although the percentages of children achieving 5A\*-C and 5A\*-G GCSE and equivalent qualifications are similar to last year's figures, the percentage of children making the expected level of progress in English and mathematics has shown a significant improvement since last year (see table above). 25% of KS4 LAC made expected progress in English and 26.7% made expected progress in maths.

## 2.24 KS4 non reportable LAC cohort – outcomes

There were an additional twelve children who were Looked After at the time of the exams, but were not in the reportable group due to them newly coming into care. Their results were as follows;

Year	No. LAC	5A*-C	5A*-C (EM)	5A*-G	1A*-G
2012	12	1	1	2	5

## 2.25 KS4 2011-12 Interventions/Additionality offered

Schools offered a range of intervention and support strategies for their LAC. Some of these included:

- A two day Sheffield Hallam University summer school for Y9 (13-14 year olds) and Y10 (14-15 year olds).
- 'Go further- Go higher' booklets and events to support LAC in making informed decisions about future education, employment and training.
- Schools have used their funding (eg PEA) to provide additional tuition in Y10 and Y11. In some cases the Virtual School has also commissioned the school to deliver 1:1 or small group support.
- Revision incentives using Meadowhall and HMV vouchers.
- Bespoke University and Sheffield College Open evening events.
- Additional study support opportunities.
- Pupil premium e.g. 1:1 tuition, or Additional in class support.

## 2.26 Attendance

Years	2008-2009			2009-2010			2010-2011			2011-2012		
	LAC	ALL	DIFF	LAC	ALL	DIFF	LAC	ALL	DIFF	LAC	ALL	DIFF
Primary	94.1	94.27	-0.17	95.7	94.22	1.48	96.3	94.52	1.8	96.9	95.2	1.7
Secondary	84.2	92.19	-7.99	85.9	91.79	-5.89	87.6	92.5	-4.9	94.6	93.6	1.0
Special	88.1	85.79	2.31	85.9	89.03	-3.13	88.3	87.71	0.6	91.3	88.9	2.4

Notes:

- ALL Attendance refers to attendance at Sheffield schools for the whole academic year.
- LAC Attendance refers to attendance for Sheffield LAC of compulsory school age at mainstream primary, secondary and special school, both in and out of the City and for children who have been in care for the whole year.
- Secondary includes academies.
- The attendance of LAC in both phases and in special school settings has increased this year and has been consistently running above the relevant citywide figure.

### **3 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD?**

- 3.1 The continued focus on the educational outcomes for looked after children has resulted in the progress which they are making being markedly improved at Key Stages 2 and 4 in 2012. This has come about through the schools focusing tightly on pupil level targets and providing a range of bespoke intervention strategies, especially with the widespread use of small group and 1:1 tuition.
- 3.2 The aim is to ensure that each looked after child fulfils their own potential and who is able to maintain good attendance and make a positive transition in to further education, employment or training with the skills and education to grow into confident people able to enjoy their life experiences and contribute positively to the economy and their community.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To note that improvements have been made in the progress which LAC are making at Key Stage 2 and 4.
- 4.2 Agree the scope of more detailed LAC education reports to Scrutiny or how this report can contribute to any further work Scrutiny may wish to undertake with regards to LAC.