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To: Learning and Development - Children, Families & Education Policy Overview Committee - 1st March 2011

Subject: Learning needs of LAC and update of previous report

Classification:

Summary: *This report intends to evidence:-*

- *the progress made by the Integrated Looked After Children Support Service (ILSS) in its development into the Virtual School (VS)*
- *the attainment, attendance and exclusion trends around Looked After Children (LAC)*
- *current progress and issues around our National Indicator (NI) 99-101 cohorts*

Introduction

1. (1) The Integrated Looked After Children Support Service (ILSS) has made positive strides this academic year in its development into the Virtual School. Key developments are the governing body, Virtual school identity, the Integrated Data Set (IDS) and the submission of a business case.

(2) Data for LAC educational outcomes remains bleak, with significant gaps between KCC LAC and all learners/LAC statistical neighbours /LAC national averages.

2. (1) The development of the service

Since September 2010 there has been significant progress in the development of the ILSS into the Virtual School through the three foundation stones of (i) Governing Body, (ii) Identity and (iii) IDS.

(i) Good progress has been made in the development of a governing body for the Virtual School where 90% of identified representatives have confirmed their support. These colleagues include representatives from key Specialist Children Service Group (SCSG) and Learning Group services, Health providers and commissioners, Headteacher/ Principal representatives, Connexions CEO and elected members.

(ii) There has also been significant movement in developing the coherent identity needed to drive this service forward. The profile of the service (ILSS) was extremely poor in September 2010, where very few Headteacher had heard of the service and that was also true of many LA officers. Several consultation processes have been undertaken, including reviewing the name of the service, with a view to re-launch with a more nationally recognisable name in line with the Virtual School agenda. Partner services were included and a list of potential names were shared with our LAC to canvass their opinion. The outcome identified the preferred name of Virtual School Kent (VSK) with 79% of all votes cast (see Table 1). In addition to this the service has a formal line management structure which includes the operational management of the East Kent LAC Nursing Team; this was not the case before this academic year.

Table 1

Kent's Virtual School				
Please rank the proposed name for Kent's Virtual School.				
If your first choice is 'Other' then please tell us your preferred name(s) . You can also choose two other suggestions.				
Please rank the suggestions below, 1st being your most preferred and 10th being your least preferred:				
	1st	2nd	3rd	Total/Place
Virtual School Kent (VSK - Very Special Kids)	54%	16.7%	8.3%	79% (1)
The Vista School - Vision to Achieve	19%	20%	14.3%	53.3%(2)
Virtual Extended Kent Community School (VEKCS)	1.2%	19%	8.3%	28.5% (3)
The Frontier School	4.8%	10.7%	7.1%	22.6% (4)
Kent Altogether Now (KAN - motto 'Kent Kan and Will Deliver')	4.8%	6%	10.7%	21.5% (5)
Kent Children in Care Services	4.8%	7.1%	9.5%	21.4% (6)
Kent Holistic Care Services	2.4%	3.6%	4.8%	10.8% (7)
Kent Wrap Around Service (KWAS)	2.4%	1.2%	6%	9.6% (10)
Kent Embrace Service (KES)	1.2%	4.8%	3.6%	9.6% (10)
Other	4.8%	1.2%	3.6%	9.6% (10)
If Other, please tell us your preferred name(s):	Suggestions included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent OPEN School (Opportunities, Partnerships, Education, Nurture) and 'open' implies - inclusive (open to all); without walls; transparent/honest; innovative • Kent Caring for Children • Children Learn In Cyber Kent (CLICK) • Kent Virtual School • School for All 			
Data Protection				
Kent County Council is a data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times. We will ensure that your information is treated in confidence and used only for the purpose of naming Kent's Virtual School.				

(iii) The development of the IDS has been significantly off trajectory as security barriers restricted the use of 'Power Pivot' or 'Dashboard Designer' to turn this from a document reader into an interactive data set. The issue around Power Pivot has now been resolved and data upload testing is about to commence. The development of the IDS is a joint project with MIU who have dedicated a project officer and considerable time to this crucial project. Its primary purpose within the VSK is to allow strategic planning and deployment of resources to maximise our impact on LAC achievement, based on accurate, live and historic data. It would also allow robust tracking and monitoring to identify issues and intervene as early as possible.

(iv) The service presented a business case in November which was approved in January 2011. This will enable significant and much needed growth in the operational team which will enable direct working with our client groups (LAC/Young Care Leavers (YCL's), carers, designated teachers and social workers). This also

enables the development of locality teams around LAC and will reduce the LAC support ratio from 1:750 to 1:30 – 1:56 dependent on district.

(2) LAC Numbers

The current number of KCC Looked After Children is 1,400, with the Asylum figures omitted. In addition there are 228 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). District breakdown continues to highlight the disproportionate number of LAC that are placed in Thanet which currently accounts for 20.6% of all KCC LAC. However, 16% of all KCC LAC are from Thanet.

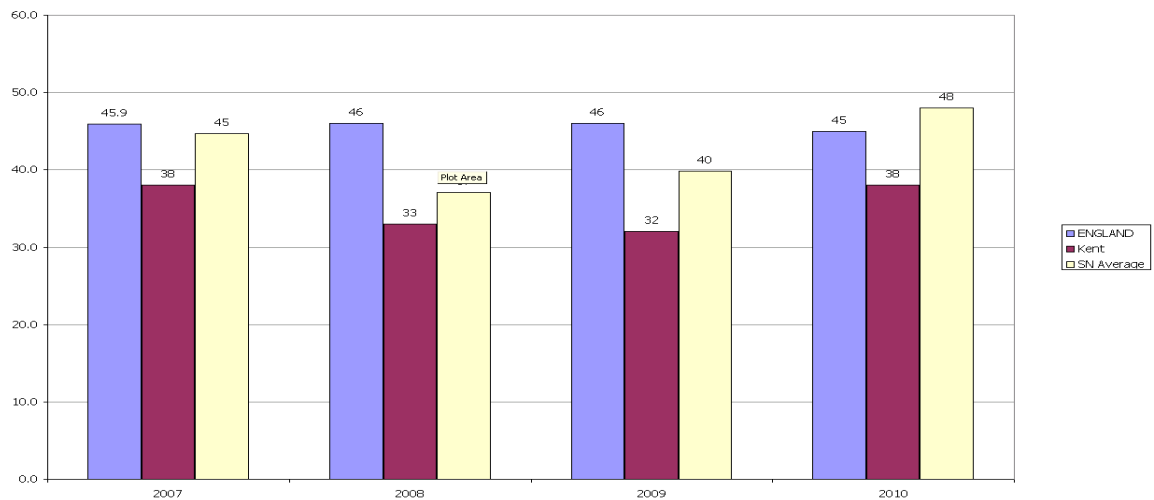
(3) Trend Analysis

Key Stage 2

NI 99 L4+ English (Table 2)

Over the last 4 years KCC LAC attainment has been variable, with our students performing on average 10.5% and 7.25% below the national and statistical neighbour average respectively.

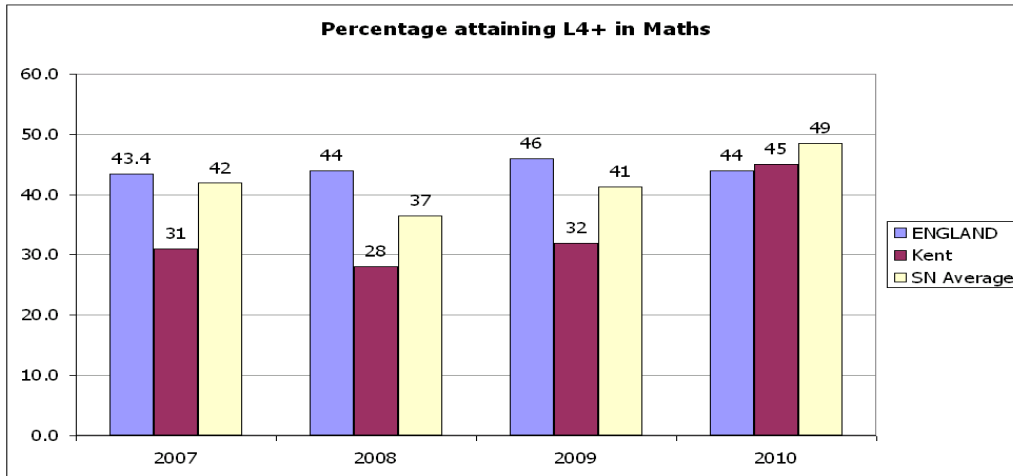
Table 2



NI 100 L4+ Mathematics (Table 3)

Over the last 4 years KCC LAC attainment has been variable, with our students performing on average 10.4% and 8.25% below the national and statistical neighbour average respectively.

Table 3

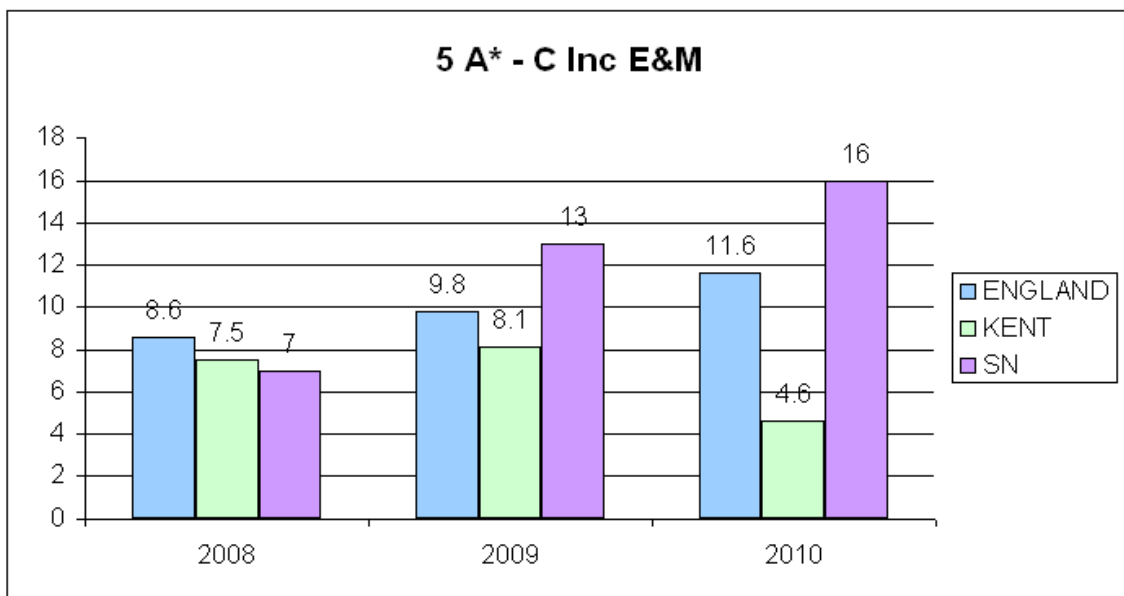


Key Stage 4

NI101 5A*-C including English & Maths (E&M)(Table 4)

Over the last 3 years KCC LAC attainment has been variable, with our students performing on average 3.27% and 5.27% below the national and statistical neighbour average respectively. Worryingly the gap was an alarming 7% with the National LAC average and 11.4% with our statistical neighbours.

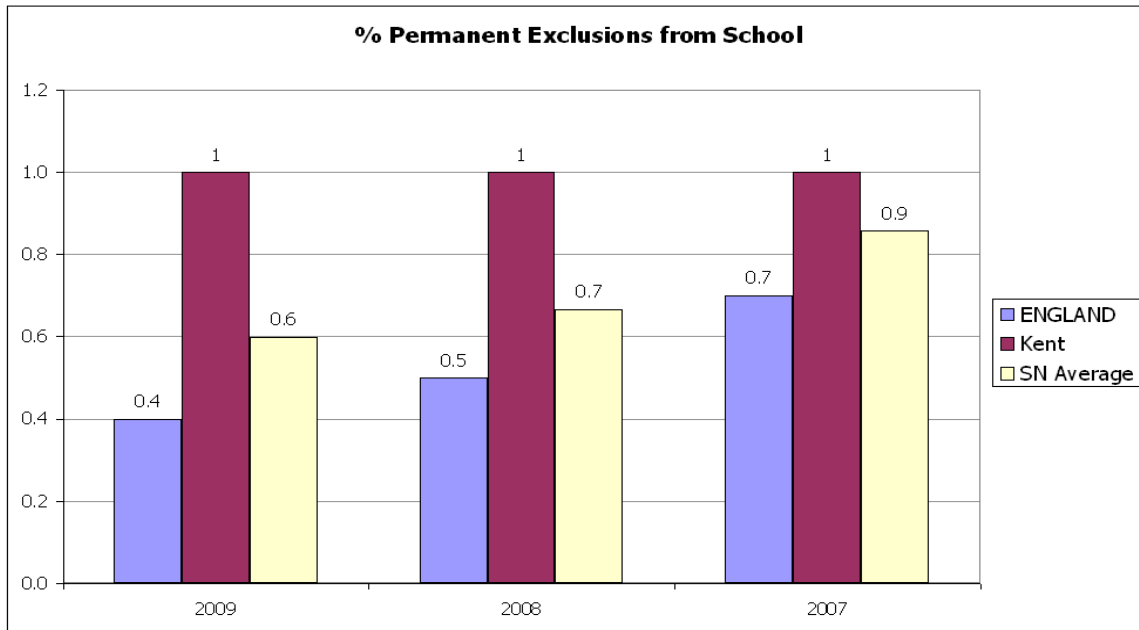
Table 4



LAC Permanent Exclusions

Table 5 shows that the rate of permanent exclusions for LAC has not reduced over the last 3 years and is significantly above the national average of 0.4% (150% above Nat Av.). Worryingly 2010 data shows no improvement and the gap is widening against both our statistical neighbours and the national average.

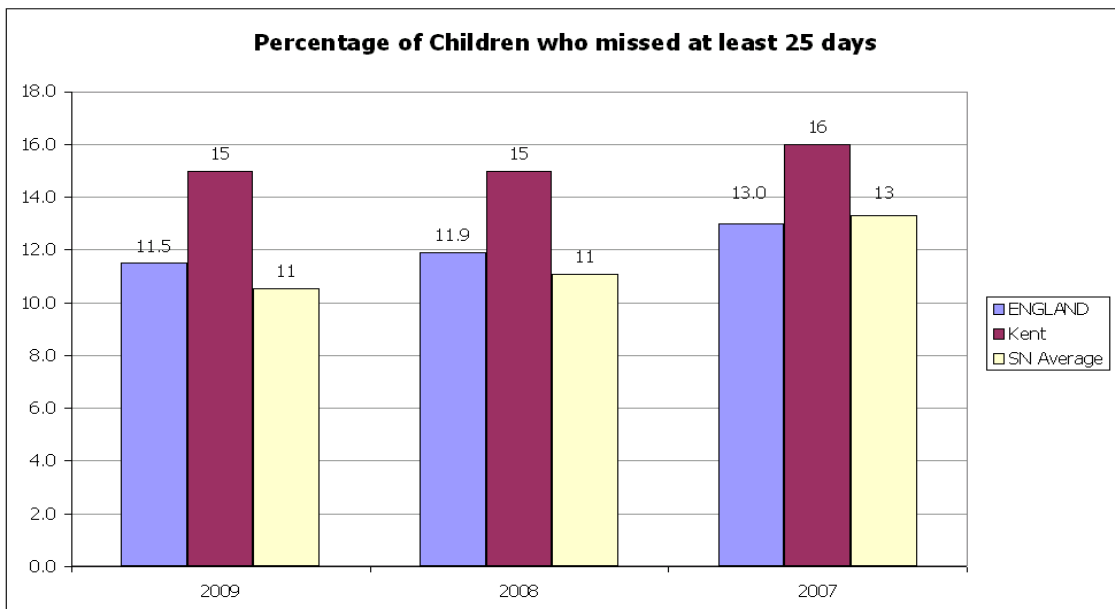
Table 5



LAC Attendance

Table 6 evidences a variable picture which again evidences the gap between our statistical neighbours and national averages. 2010 25+ days absence data set evidenced an increase in LAC from 15% 2009 to 16.3% 2010.

Table 6



(4) Current Progress

10/11 cohort

Limited up to date data on current progress due to the Personal Education Plan (PEP) audit being cancelled post Ofsted. MIU have requested a progress audit unfortunately which has had a poor response especially with the KS2 return, but continue to pursue. NI 99 & 100, the cohort size is currently 54 students and based on the poor return only 12 students met the on track criteria to meet NI99 and only 8 for NI100 representing 22.2% and 14.8% respectively. This evidences the lack of current progress data we have access to and will have no reflection on actual attainment levels. This year group is made up of 25% Statement of Special educational Needs (SEN), with a further 4 percent awaiting statutory assessment and 52% of the cohort have been in care less than 2 years.

NI 101 cohort size 121 students, with only 15 meeting the Green criteria. Within the 09/10 cohort, only 58% of the Green group achieved NI 101 and 0% of the Amber and Red cohort meeting the required standard. If this were to be replicated 10/11 then only 9 students would gain 5 A* - C (including E&M) which would indicate an improvement in NI101 to 7.2%. This cohort has 24% SEN and 47% have been in care less than 2 years.

Related Issues

3. LAC Educational Progress

To ensure that we can improve outcomes for our LAC there needs to be a holistic approach which is strategically targeted based upon accurate data. To achieve this it is imperative that there is a functional integrated data set (2.1(iii)), which can be used proactively to track and monitor students progress (2.4), attendance and exclusions (2.3).

Next Steps

4.

- Effectively translate the business case into cohesive locality teams around LAC.
- Develop and implement the IDS which is fit for purpose for a multitude of services and external users.
- Identify vulnerable cohorts / learners within our LAC population and effectively deploy resources in a timely manner to maximise LAC outcomes.

Recommendations:

5. Members of the Learning and Development Children, Families and Education Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- Note the proposal to change the name of the service from Integrated Looked After children Support service (ILSS) to Virtual School Kent (VSK) as supported by our LAC.
- Support the ongoing development of the Integrated Data Set (IDS) which is currently off trajectory.

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Background Documents:
None

Other Useful Information
None