

Context

The Voyage Learning Campus (VLC) is an alternative provision serving the North Somerset local authority. The provision supports students from KS1 to KS4 who are unable to attend mainstream provision, either because they have been permanently excluded or because they require medical tuition. It currently is based across 3 sites; 2 in Weston Super Mare and 1 in Nailsea.

Places at the VLC are commissioned through North Somerset and the Inclusion Panel. Currently, it is not possible for schools to request fixed term placements other than for medical tuition. There are 80 places within the behaviour provision and 27 places within medical tuition.

Due to the nature of the provision, numbers of students fluctuate. Currently there are 81 students on roll across the campus, of which 36 are Pupil Premium (44%). 2 students have an EHCP and there are a further 6 EHCPs assessments being or due to be undertaken. There are 2 students who are currently in Local Authority Care (and one post LAC student); it also worth noting that a number of students are living outside of the family home, including some in private fostering arrangements.

Students join throughout the year and in most cases have experienced significant disruption to their education prior to starting to us with the VLC, either because of repeated exclusions, managed moves or medical problems resulting in low attendance.

A new Principal took up post in September 2019, and prior to that an acting Principal had been leading the school for 18 months. A budget deficit means that there is now a need to undertake a significant restructure which is understandably causing some concerns amongst the staff body. A priority for the new Principal is to ensure as much stability as possible during this period of change for both staff and students. There is close partnership working with the local authority to ensure that a plan to recover the deficit over the next 5 years is in place.

There is a growing and committed Management Committee and a new interim Chair took up post in September 2019. He is currently working with Governor Services to ensure he has the appropriate training to undertake the role. The Management Committee is fully cognisant of its responsibilities around monitoring and overseeing the budget and new processes are in place to ensure that these responsibilities are undertaken to hold the Principal and Business Manager to account. Work to recruit new members to the Management Committee is ongoing and new members are starting in September 2019.

The school is keen to establish strong links with the wider education and local community. It is a member of the Inclusion Panel, working collaboratively to support children and young people to successfully access mainstream provision. This has resulted in a number of children successfully reintegrating into mainstream schools.

Overall Effectiveness

The provision at the VLC has significant strengths. Outcomes for students are improving and staff are united in a shared vision for supporting students into the next stage of their education journey successfully. Not all teaching is robustly monitored and there are inconsistencies in practice which will be addressed throughout this year as part of the appraisal system. Additionally, a renewed focus on CPD will seek to enhance teachers' pedagogy, underpinned by current research into best practice.

Behaviour is positive and when incidents of poor behaviour do happen, the school responds in a supportive way to help students improve. There are numerous individual successes for students and there is a strong picture of students reintegrating into mainstream or specialist settings. On leaving the VLC the vast majority of students have secured destinations and life chances are significantly improved from those likely at the time of their referral.

Systems for safeguarding are in place and there is a strong culture of safeguarding amongst staff. There is highly effective multi agency working, as well as engagement with the wider education community through the North Somerset Inclusion Panels. Medical tuition works well with health professionals, including Tier 4 services, to ensure the most vulnerable in our communities are able to successfully access learning.

Curriculum provision within the primary setting is developed around the Thrive approach. There is significant evidence of positive impact, particularly when looking at reintegration figures. There is a need to review the curriculum intent and implementation across KS3 and KS4 and a curriculum review, alongside a restructure of the school, is a key part of the school development plan for the forthcoming year.

Quality of education

The curriculum for students at Voyage Learning Campus has been adapted significantly to meet their needs, and a review of the curriculum is a key part of the 2019-20 School Development Plan, (SDP). Schemes of work are in place for KS3-4 for English, Maths and Science which plan for the learning that should occur at key points throughout the year. These are flexible and can be adapted to meet the needs and interests of learners.

Within the primary provision, the curriculum is collaboratively planned around key topics with a focus on literacy and numeracy. The Thrive model drives planning so that gaps in students' social and emotional development are closed.

From September 2019 KS4 students will be offered a range of GCSEs including:

- English Language
- Maths
- Citizenship
- Biology
- Art and Design

Entry level and vocational qualifications are also available for students to undertake including:

- English
- Maths
- Home Cooking Skills
- Motor Vehicle Studies
- Science

Within the medical tuition service, staff tailor the curriculum to each child and work closely with students' main school to ensure they are supported with the GCSEs that they are due to be entered for.

Outcomes at KS4 show an improving picture:

Measure	% 2018-19	% 2017-18
5+ GCSEs 9 – 4 (inc English and Maths)	8%	2%
5+ GCSEs 9 - 1 (or equivalent)	39%	23%
1+ GCSEs 9 - 1 (or equivalent)	86%	77%
1+ pass in any qualification or award	97%	89%

In 2019, 97% of students left with at least one formal qualification (an increase from 89% in 2018). Art and Design is a particular strength at KS4 with 67% of students gaining a grade 4 or above, including 7 grade 6 and 1 grade 7. There was a 100% pass rate for the entry level qualifications students were entered for.

A number of students also have the opportunity to undertake work experience placements, supporting them to develop work based skills and competencies to ensure successful transition into post 16 pathways. Of students who left in 2019, 92% had secured college placements for successful transition into post 16 education. This included apprenticeships, foundation courses and specialist ASD provision.

Literacy development is a priority across the whole school, for example:

- Reading is embedded as regular practice in primary and KS3
- Annual campus wide celebration of World Book Day
- Toe by Toe programme is used to raise reading levels offering 1:1 support for students, dependent upon their baseline assessments
- Emphasis on vocabulary development with displays used to reinforce key language

Lesson observations and work scrutinies take place across the school, although there is not a single agreed process for this. This will be developed across the year, linked to appraisal and a focus on teaching and learning across all age groups.

Focus for improvement:

1. Undertake a curriculum review to establish clear curriculum intent at each key stage
2. Establish a shared understanding of what good quality teaching and learning looks like across the VLC, supported by a high quality CPD offer for all staff

Behaviour and attitudes

Staff and parent/carer voice is very positive about the culture of care, support and respect that exists across the school. Staff are acutely aware of the challenges that many of our students face, including a high level of trauma, and adopt appropriate strategies to support them to engage positively in their learning. All staff are 'team teaching' trained to use a range of positive handling and de-escalation strategies. De-escalation is key to managing behaviour across the school. Visitors to the school, including support professionals, comment positively about the calm atmosphere and the engagement of students within the school.

The behaviour policy is adapted to meet the needs of students of different ages. This means that there are some inconsistencies when students move between different stages.

For the majority of students, behaviour improves during their time at the VLC. For example, numbers of students reintegrating into new schools increased during the previous academic year from 18 in 2017/18 to 26 in 2018/19. There were no permanent exclusions during 2018/19. In the majority of cases, students engage in learning, where in previous schools they were out of lessons in isolation or on excluded. Days lost to exclusions declined during 2018/19 to 251 in total, from 263 days in 2017/18 and 300 days in 2106/17. However, the actual number of exclusions increased very slightly from 105 to 108. Nonetheless, compared to national figures, the % of students with 1 or more exclusion is relatively low at 31.9% - in 2017/18 this was 57.9% for PRUs nationally. Additionally, the fixed period exclusion rate was 70.1%, compared to 158.4% nationally for PRUs during 207-18. However, it should be noted that this rate, whilst low compared to national, has risen from 66.9% during the previous academic year.

Attendance is below national average as might be expected, given the vulnerabilities of the cohort and attendance within AP and PRUs nationally. Overall attendance for 2018-19 was 52.9%; this is below the national average for PRUs in 2107-18 and is an area for development. This figure is particularly impacted by medical tuition provision, where recorded attendance was 38.7%, however, this is reflective of the needs of the students who require highly differentiated and reduced provision as a consequence of their medical and mental health needs.

Students are taking more pride in their appearance and most now wear the expected uniform as expected. This is helping to build a positive culture within the school and supports a sense of community and belonging.

Focus for improvement:

1. Embed a new behaviour policy which is ACE/trauma informed and promotes consistency across centres
2. Reduce incidences of unauthorised absences across the whole school

Personal development

The school works to enhance students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development in a variety of ways across the different centres. There are regular assemblies across the 3 behaviour sites which raises awareness of equality and diversity and British values. The use of the First News newspaper raises the students' knowledge and understanding of contemporary issues which can often lead to respectful debate and discussion. Citizenship GCSE is also part of our core KS4 offer.

Bullying is not prevalent. Students do demonstrate tolerance and acceptance of one another but at times they can lack the social skills to show this clearly. However, many students make great progress, with the support of staff, in resolving conflict more positively. Many of our students have experienced challenging environments and staff use appropriate strategies to model emotional regulation.

Within the medical tuition provision, students are very respectful of differences and show empathy for others' social and emotional challenges. An engagement curriculum, structured games and supported break times help staff model this and build confidence, self-esteem and ability to communicate effectively with others. Theraplay is used in primary and KS3 to help students regulate emotions and build positive relationships with others.

Pastoral support is of a good quality across the school; all students have a key tutor or targeted support in primary from their class teacher. There is regular positive contact with parents and carers who talk positively of the support they and their children receive. Within primary there are termly parental activities and the SCFLO works proactively with parents/carers to help them engage with wider support for home circumstances. The school promotes the use of Kooth, an online counselling service, to support students' mental health and wellbeing. There has also been work with the Samaritans and counselling services.

The school engages with a wide range of external agencies to help support students become confident, resilient and independent. This includes the school nursing team, PCSOs, the fire service, CAMHS and charities such as Guide Dogs for the Blind. This year some students have funding for weekly horse-riding lessons; staff have commented positively about the impact these have had on the students' behaviour and confidence.

Careers advice and guidance is individualised for students with support for college visits and applications. Additionally, many students at KS4 enjoy successful work experience placements which help them develop skills for the workplace. The success of this work can be evidenced in NEET data and an improving picture with regard to exam outcomes at KS4. There is further work for the school to do around a consistent careers programme, using the Gatsby Benchmarks to evaluate and develop our careers provision. This is planned as part of our curriculum review within the school development plan. In particular, the school would like to enhance its links with local colleges

A PSHE programme is in place and this will need to be reviewed to meet statutory guidelines coming into place in September 2020.

Focus for improvement:

1. Use the Gatsby Benchmarks to evaluate and develop the careers advice and guidance students receive across the school
2. As part of the wide curriculum review, develop a Personal Development curriculum which meets statutory requirements and enables students to understand how to maintain a safe lifestyle, including how to support their own mental health and wellbeing

Leadership & management

A new Principal was appointed in September 2019 and is working with senior staff, the management committee and staff across the whole school to establish a clear vision for the future of the VLC that is shared by all stakeholders. This is particularly pressing within the context of a budget deficit for which a recovery plan is in place; as a consequence there is a consultation process happening which will implement changes for Feb 2020. There is a shared commitment to supporting vulnerable and at times, challenging, young people to help them secure positive outcomes as they progress through their educational journey.

There are regular opportunities for staff voice and this is starting to be more actively used to drive forward the overall development of the VLC. A review of CPD will support teachers in developing their practice and share knowledge and skills from across the school. The impact of this will be monitored across the year through the school development plan.

The relationships between staff and students are strong, and in many cases based on mutual respect. Expectations for students are rising and curriculum leaders are committed to supporting students achieve the strongest outcomes at GCSE as possible. They are also clear in working to support teachers develop appropriate subject knowledge and pedagogical approaches. Leaders including the SENCO, work effectively with external agencies and schools to help students either return to mainstream or find appropriate specialist placements. The impact of this work can also be evidenced through the high number of EHCP assessments successfully undertaken.

Safeguarding in the school is effective. The introduction of CPOMS during the previous academic year has strengthened record keeping and information sharing. It also facilitates early identification of concerns and the trained DSL are quick to provide early help and support, through engaging with parents and carers, and using the school SCFLO to offer parenting support. There is strong engagement and collaboration with local partnerships through the school's attendance at the Bournville One team meeting. This ensures local safeguarding issues are known and can be fed back into work with the students. Safeguarding processes, such as safer recruitment, site safety and management of visitors are robust.

There is a new chair of the management committee, who took up their role in September 2019. They are keen to support the new Principal and the school leaders through a period of change. He is working well with governor support services to ensure he has the appropriate training. This is already having an impact with a year plan for committee meetings which are structured around the strategic responsibilities of the committee, rather than operational management of systems.

Focus for improvement:

1. Establish clear vision for the future of the VLC which outlines its core purpose, underpinned by high expectations for all students
2. Develop a high quality CPD programme which focuses on developing staff knowledge and skills to support an innovative curriculum offer across both primary and secondary provision