🔍 **Case Study**

Pupil Pathways and London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Virtual School

Barking & Dagenham

How Foresight is supporting the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) Virtual School to track Ever CIN and vulnerable pupils and improve collaboration across the local authority
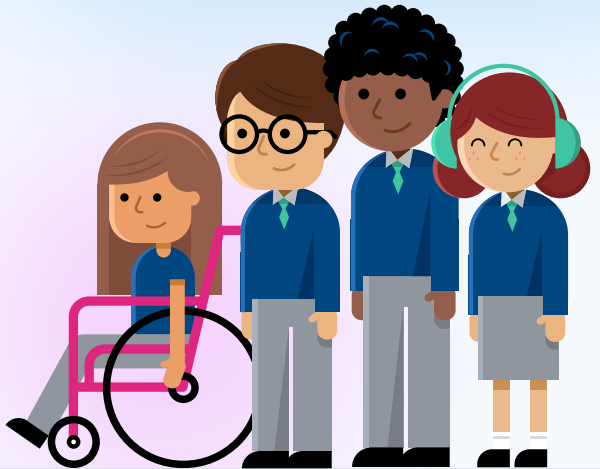
INTRODUCTION

We spoke to Adela Kay, who oversees Children in Need (CIN) and Children in Child Protection Plan (CP) as part of the LBBD Virtual School team, to learn more about her innovative approach to tracking and monitoring vulnerable pupils in her local authority.

Additionally, Adela has been championing the need for Ever CIN pupils to be monitored by schools to ensure they receive the ongoing support they need, and in doing so has strengthened collaboration between education and social care teams in LBBD.

Glossary

Ever CIN is a term used to describe children who have been in need at any point in the last six reporting years. A child is considered "in need" if they have been assessed by a social worker and found to need help and protection. This could be due to risks to their development or health, such as: Neglect, Domestic abuse in the family, and Disability. The measure is reported on a six-year period even as more years of data become available so that it can be compared over years.

FSM 6, or Ever 6 FSM, refers to children who have been eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the past six years.

CHALLENGE

Background

In her role as the LBBD Virtual School Lead for Children in Need and Children in Child Protection Plan, Adela needed to be able to monitor and track CIN, CP and Ever CIN children, and share this information with schools. However, most school MIS systems are outdated or do not have accurate records and rely on their Virtual Schools to gather this information.

To tackle this data gap, Adela embarked on ambitious project to build an up-to-date database of these pupils and regularly share with schools to ensure this vulnerable cohort receives the necessary support and ongoing care required.

Drawing data from their social care management platform and information available in the school MIS, Adela created a comprehensive record of pupils in the local authority who are CIN, CP or Ever CIN.

The inclusion of Ever CIN pupils was challenging in that information such as a child's UPN recorded in existing systems may have changed over the six years or a child may have been Ever

CIN at primary school, but this information was lost during transition. This meant that it was an intensely manual process to gather this data.

However, Adela strongly believes that these pupils should be monitored in the same way that FSM Ever 6 pupils [see glossary] are and that obtaining this historical data was necessary to track long-term outcomes of this vulnerable cohort.

> *"I think from an education point of view [tracking only current CIN or CP pupils] is really flawed and I think it doesn't give the longitudinal care that our young people need when they've had a period of chaos."*
>
> **– Adela Kay**

The challenges facing CIN and Ever CIN pupils can be seen in the DfE's 2024 report **'Outcomes for children in need, including children looked after by local authorities in England: 2023'**

Adela could also see the benefits of bringing in data on other vulnerable children, such as those who are LAC or PLAC, as well as the attendance

data of the cohort to meet the requirements of the new statutory guidance. The resulting database pulled together a breadth of pupil data not available in any other system and which was incredibly powerful in enabling Adela to share information with schools to ensure vulnerable pupils were receiving the support they needed. However, this was a highly manual process for Adela and a more efficient, more automated system was called for.
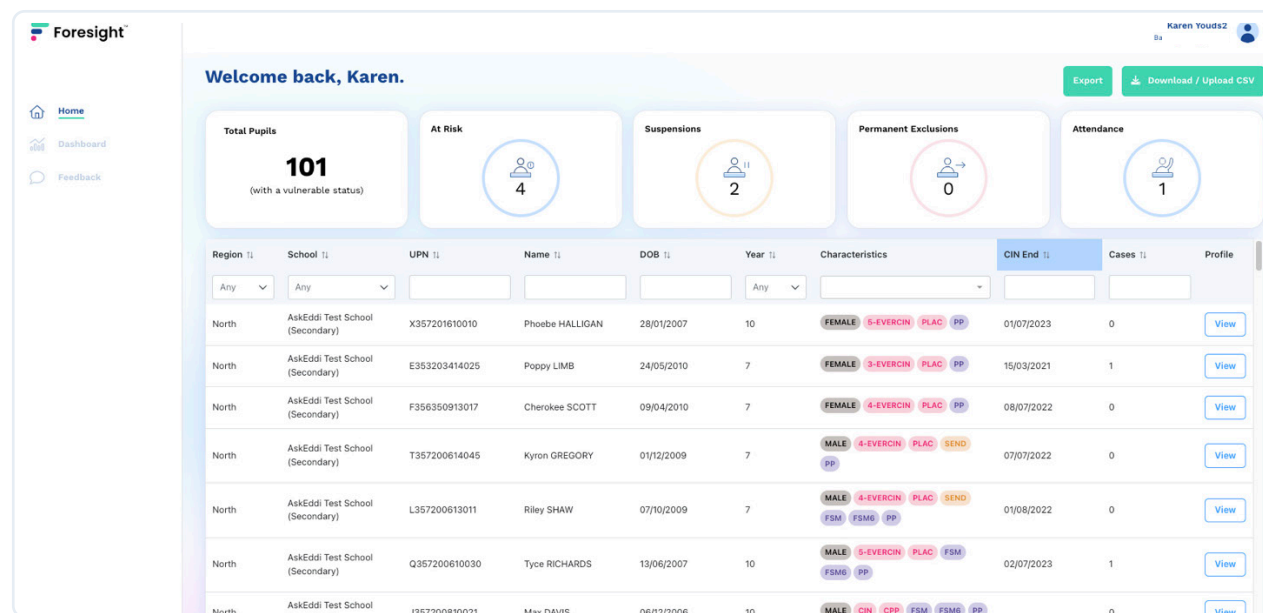
SOLUTION

Partnership with Foresight

Building on LBBD's existing partnership with Pupil Pathways, we have worked closely with Adela to bring the immense amount of data she's gathered and the functionality she needs into our attendance and inclusion platform Foresight.

In doing so, we have created a centralised platform with an up-to-date record of information which schools need to have access to in order to effectively track their vulnerable pupils and which they currently don't have access to via their MIS.

A unique dashboard in Foresight is now available to the whole Virtual School team, enabling them to work more efficiently in managing their cohorts across all schools.

The process of gathering data is now streamlined as Pupil Pathways is fully integrated with a school's MIS, requiring just a monthly update of additional data by the Virtual School team. A consistent, single system for monitoring children over a 6-year period is now available to the Virtual School team, providing a solution to the problem of social care data being held on various systems and not easily accessible to schools.

Virtual School Dashboard in Foresight

The Foresight platform removes a large amount of the data management needed by Adela, meaning she has the capacity to spend more time working with schools and other teams in the local authority. The platform provides a clear overview of pupils across all schools and can be easily filtered by characteristic or label for analysis or sharing. Attendance data and any cases created for the pupils are included and a flag is raised during transition so that secondary schools are aware of children who have or have had a social worker.

"It's about the power of being able to have information at your fingertips about lots of different cohorts of children very quickly... including the Ever CIN, even if that's not available on your MIS system... it will make a huge difference"

Adela Kay

A further advantage of bringing this information into Foresight is that the data benefits from GDPR-compliance that the platform guarantees.

Foresight™

CONCLUSION

Impact

The Foresight platform facilitates Adela's continued championing of the importance of tracking Ever CIN pupils in the local authority. Adela can access a detailed profile of each pupil, including latest CIN status and attendance data, which can be regularly shared with the school to ensure they are receiving the ongoing support they need.

Tracking Ever CIN over a 6-year period supports children while in school but is also important for transition in-year and through major key stages like primary to secondary. Having this information within Pupil Pathways enables easy, secure tracking across these key milestones too.

The Virtual School team are the link between LA social care and vulnerable children in schools. Having this pupil information in one place has enabled Adela to strengthen collaboration with social care teams in the local authority, particularly in relation to attendance. Acknowledging that this is a challenging topic for both schools and social care teams, she is able to share attendance data for CIN, CP and Ever CIN pupils with these teams and help them identify potential safeguarding problems linked to attendance.

Similarly, LBBD's Virtual School's Attendance Lead can approach schools equipped with data from Foresight and start proactive discussions about the attendance of vulnerable pupils.

What's next?

Tracking of Ever CIN pupils is currently non-statutory, however Adela hopes that through her data she can demonstrate to other Virtual Schools the value of tracking these pupils alongside current CIN and CP pupils and how important it is during transition for these children.

LBBD, like many LAs face a real challenge with monitoring children from their local authority who go to school in neighbouring boroughs. This means that Virtual Schools are missing key information such as social care records for these pupils, who risk falling between the cracks. A significant aim for the next stage of Pupil Pathways' work with Adela and the Virtual School team is to facilitate more collaborative working and data-sharing across borders with neighbouring local authorities, with the goal that information on pupils attending school outside the LA would also be available in Foresight.