

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26 SHROPSHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Voices of Tomorrow 'take-over' of Corporate Parenting Board



1.0 This is the Annual Report for Shropshire Virtual School (SVS) 2025-26.

Our aim is to be giving the right support in the right place and at the right time, using voices from our young people and colleagues to develop and evolve. We promote excellent opportunities and champion our pupils' achievements - and as part of the Corporate Parent we always take the approach of considering whether something is 'good enough for our own child.' This year the LGA PEER REVIEW and OFSTED (Thematic SEND) recognised the work of the Shropshire Virtual School:

- "The remit and leadership of the Virtual School is a real strength that supports the Inclusion agenda"
- "Voices of Tomorrow (Child in Care Council) is a recognised strength and is amplifying voices of these children in Shropshire."
- How SVS contributes to "A developing and well-received graduated response and SEND Support offer"
- and a "Strong inclusion ethos reflected in reduced permanent exclusions"

The Virtual School started its journey towards achieving the NNSP accreditation in August 2025, this is the **National Nurturing School Programme** in alliance with NurtureUK. Our aim is to submit our application by April 2027.



1.1 The Virtual School has a **Governing Body** that meets termly and acts as a 'critical friend' with support and challenge. In addition to the Head Teacher, members include representatives from a Trust, Social Care, Learning & Skills and an Early Years setting. SVS continues to have robust **partnerships** with our regional West Midlands VS Heads and has increased links nationally.

1.2 Shropshire Virtual School plays an integral role in Corporate Parenting. In the Autumn of 2026, SVS shared with the Corporate Parenting Board how our young people have designed and shaped their new Children in Care Council – which they have called Voices of Tomorrow.



 Voice of CLA
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 Corporate parent
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1.3 At the end of July 2026 Shropshire Virtual School were supporting 700 Children who are Looked After from year -2 to 13 (the year in which they turn 18). There has been a **+5.26% change in the numbers** of looked after children from year -2 to 13 through this academic year. (Year -2 refers to two years before Reception). In comparison to last academic year there has been a +1.5% change in Key stage 5 and a +1.6% change in statutory school year numbers and a drop in Early Years from 98 to 77 children. Our young people have achieved great things this year, here is one example that we have celebrated...

1.4 Attainment and Progress

The NCER Intelligence Overview report identified Shropshire Virtual School's verified performance for 24-25 as above national average and significantly improved in Reading, Attainment 8, Persistent absence, Attendance, Suspension Rate, Exclusions, Repeat Suspension Rate, English and Maths GCSEs at grades 4+ and 5+. Additionally, it identified significant improvement in Phonics and the Combined outcome at the end of Key Stage 2

Results for summer 2025 were verified in Spring 2026. Our children achieved above national and regional averages for Phonics, Reading and Writing. They achieved above national in GCSE English and Maths 5-9, Good Level of Development and Attainment 8. The gap was narrowed between CLA and all Shropshire Learners in Reading, Writing, English and Maths 5-9 and Attainment 8. End of KS2 Maths was an area below national and regional averages

Outcomes for Shropshire CLA (SSD903 cohorts) for summer 2026 are at present unverified and subject to change. Data from Nexus indicates outcomes were:

- Good Level of Development (GLD): our children achieved in-line with CLA National data and broadly in-line with the CLA Regional benchmark; outcomes **exceed** both Regional and National benchmarks in Mathematics and Literacy



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- Year 1 Phonics: our children are indicated to have achieved 3.2% **above the national** benchmark for CLA and 2.2% **above the regional** benchmark for CLA.
- End of Key Stage 2: our children **exceeded** national benchmarks in **all five SATs measures** and regional benchmarks in four, with reading slightly below the regional figure.
- Examples of Key Stage 4 achievements are included in the main report. Data is not able to be published given that it is currently unverified
- In Key Stage 5 there were considerable successes for our students this summer. As Corporate Parents for our looked after young people we are very proud of their achievements this year and celebrate with them as families do. Headlines include one student (KB) going to the University of Sussex to study Law and another is hoping to attend Birmingham City University. One young person achieved high grades of B B C. Seven young people sat Level 3 qualifications, 100% of the students achieved grades which support their next steps and two achieved **Triple Distinctions**. **Six young people who are looked after and leaving year 13 are intending to head to University this year**

1.5 Attendance and engagement

A notable achievement has been **0 permanent exclusions for Shropshire Looked After Children for five consecutive academic years**. Additionally, **19 permanent exclusions were prevented** last academic year compared to 12 the previous year.

Attendance for the reportable cohort (in care 12 months): The DFE report 2025 indicated overall absence rate for Shropshire CLA was 7.6%, this is lower than statistical neighbours (except for Herefordshire) and shows **sustained improvement over the 5 year period**.

The end-of-year summary for 25-26 indicated for all Shropshire CLA that overall attendance was 91.24%, which is only 1.7% below Shropshire All Learners

Engagement in Key Stage 5: indicative data at the end of August for year 13 pupils: 52.1% have a college or training place; 2.8% have a place at a university; 8.5% are employed. Based on the average monthly position for December, January and February, **16.0%** of Shropshire CLA in KS5 were NEET, while 84.0% were in education, employment or training (EET). **This is a significant improvement on 24/25 where the average figure was 23% ie 77% in EET**. At the end of the 2025–26 academic year, **82%** of KS5 young people were EET. Of those, **86.4%** were in further education and **13.7%** were in employment, training or an apprenticeship.

1.6 Personal Education Plans

The School Target for PEPs was 95% in both completion and quality - this target is met or exceeded in the Combined outcome for both indicators.

PEPs : Completion and Quality Average performance across the academic year by cohort		
Measure	Year -1 to Year 11	Key Stage 5
Completion Termly average	99.8%	96%
Quality Termly average	96.7%	93%
Combined cohorts - average per term: completion		99.1%
Combined cohorts - average per term: quality		96.1%

(Data is for children in year -1 and Reception age. The SVS Quality descriptors can be found here [Personal education plan \(PEP\) | Shropshire Council](#))



The NAVSH (National Association of Virtual School Heads) Annual Survey indicated that national data is:

- Completion of PEP stands at 96.6% for statutory school years and 91% for post 16
- 70% of PEPs are rated as good quality

This puts Shropshire highly above national rates for completion and quality

1.7 Pupil Premium Plus

A new PP+ Policy was published for the 2025-26 financial year and is on our website at [Pupil Premium Plus | Shropshire Council](#). To drive the focus on supporting schools to successfully include our young people and provide opportunities such as cultural capital, transitions and academic achievement the Virtual School has created a PP+ support map [pupil-premium-plus-support-map-2023-24.pdf \(shropshire.gov.uk\)](#). This continually evolves as we strive to source new opportunities for engagement and progress.



The Virtual School has used PP+ and other Grants to develop a comprehensive training offer, in summary SVS have rolled out:

- **Theory and Practice of Nurture Groups to 144 practitioners**
- **Boxall Profile Tool training to 153 practitioners**
- **Emotion Coaching to 90 practitioners**
- **Attachment and trauma training to 27 schools**

SVS nominated 12 Shropshire schools for the ARC Award this year in recognition of the progress made in our Hearts and Minds programme (attachment & trauma, emotion coaching and relational/inclusive practice)

Shropshire have the winning Secondary School of the year for the West Midlands Region! and have 4 schools who have Highly Recommended across primary, secondary and specialist.

See the full report for examples of impact from the PP+ spend.

1.8 Pupil Voice and Participation

The Virtual School plays an integral role in the Impact Board and the Participation Strategy. **Voices of Tomorrow (VOT)** is our CLA Council and have this year been involved in:

- Co-producing the new PEP to align with Nurture principles
- Planning for this year's Celebration event took place with our children
- 'Take-over' of Corporate Parenting Board with impact and actions from their voice – see full report.
- A young person's speech has been used in SVS's attachment and trauma responsive schools training pack.
- Recruitment for SVS staff
- A visit to London to support their understanding of how their voices can be heard, including in Parliament.
- On March 10th our group of Jaz-prentices delivered a workshop at the **National Conference for Virtual School Heads** on their innovative Roadshow. **One of our young people (K) supported Jaz Ampaw-Farr with her keynote on the main stage** and co-presented the Workshop with the VS Head Teacher. She has now been asked to present on stage about the messages she is passionate about to support driving change in the care and education systems – this will be at a significant event in **BAFTA London** this October where Jaz Ampaw-Farr will premiere her film and show a film about the Jaz-prentices journey!



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1.9 Extended Duties

Connect



Shropshire Virtual School

To improve access to support for families, we have developed a network of local PLAC and Kinship in three designated schools across the county to host joint parent sessions, creating opportunities for parents and carers to connect, share experiences, access specialist advice and access to the CATCH online platform (practical resources, guidance and strategies). Our offer can be seen in our 'CONNECT' pages on the Virtual School website [Connect | Shropshire Council](#)

The introduction of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill places a stronger focus on identifying and supporting children in kinship care SVS continues to develop our offer with advice, guidance, training and targeted interventions. Our Working Together pilot has developed into a multi-disciplinary approach to swift resolution and priority oversight for children with a safeguarding vulnerability without suitable education. The **DFE recorded a video of the SVS Head Teacher sharing this approach and it has been included in their Toolkit for Schools.**

2.0 A selection of compliments for Shropshire Virtual School from 2025-26

It was a truly wonderful event and a real privilege to be part of it - the care, thought and effort that went into every aspect of the day was clear to see, and it created a fantastic opportunity to recognise and celebrate the achievements, talents and potential of some of our most remarkable children and young people. What stood out most was the pride, confidence and happiness on the faces of the young people and those supporting them. These moments matter enormously. They help our children know that they are valued, believed in and celebrated for who they are and what they achieve. I know events like this take a huge amount of work behind the scenes, often over many months, and I wanted to make sure you all know how much your commitment and dedication is appreciated. The Virtual School continues to make a real difference to the lives of our children and young people, and Saturday was a powerful reminder of the impact of your work."

Tanya Miles, CEO for Shropshire – about the Celebration Event in September 2026.

"We have had tremendous support from Shropshire VS – especially in helping us advocate for a Previously Looked After Child through secondary application. So, thank you everyone for everything you do every day"
Beth Rowe the Deputy Head at St Giles:

A very informative session that reinforced the importance of partnership working. It has given me greater confidence in supporting children through their health and educational journey. "

(Various Foster Carers, speaking about training for carers delivered by Katherine Jones and Jo Betts in SVS)

"I have, once again, loved working so closely with you all. Your support, expertise and passion makes all the difference in these young people's futures."

Sarah Longhurst, Asst Head and SENDCo Mary Webb School

"Just wanted to say how amazing (the training) was last week... it was spot on!!! All those attending said that they could have listened..for hours and it was some of the best training they'd ever had."

Andy Parkhurst, Deputy Head Lakelands School talking about training as part of the SVS Hearts and Minds programme

"GREAT session with Elle and H this morning – they were both super...appreciate you and your team so much for holding me up during times like this"

A Head Teacher about support from SVS and the Educational Psychologist Dr Elle Tomlinson

Report by Jo Kelly, Head Teacher, Shropshire Virtual School

Date: 7th September 2026



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