

by the bridge with Cambian

We are By the Bridge.
We Are Fostering.

Education & Achievement Report Academic Year 2017-18



About Us

We are By the Bridge, a leading independent fostering provider with:

- 489 families, 680 Children (September 2018)
- 15+ years experience
- Outstanding Ofsted (By the Bridge)
- Good Ofsted (By the Bridge North West)
- 160+ Staff in 8 Regional Offices plus Head Office

We find and train the best foster parents so that young people in care get a better chance in life as a result of their foster family's commitment and dedication.

Our unique therapeutic approach to fostering puts the foster parents at the centre of our team, supporting the development and progress of a child. Seeing a child in care discover their potential, giving them the best possible chance at happiness and achieving their personal best - it's what makes fostering so rewarding.

Our Vision

By the Bridge with Cambian (BtBwC) was founded to celebrate the uniqueness of individuals, and to create an environment in which the most disadvantaged young people are encouraged to:

- Believe and have confidence in themselves
- Explore their gifts and talents and develop independence of spirit
- Have enthusiasm for change
- Hunger for knowledge
- Accept other traditions
- Live in harmony with themselves and society.

In summary, our vision is to give back to traumatised young people the opportunities they have missed.

Education Policy, Objectives and Services:

We place the highest priority on our children and young people receiving a full education so that they can be prepared for adult life and fulfil their own potential.

We employ 10 local Education Advisors / Get-a-Lifestyle Consultants (**EAGaLs**) and 4 **Lead EAgals**, who facilitate and advocate for full educational support for all BtBwC children and young people. EAGaLs seek to ensure all children and young people are able to reach their targets and fulfil their potential – either by attending school or a suitably appropriate alternative education provision, for a minimum of 25 hours per

week. We also facilitate opportunities for our young people to access a broad further education offer - eg apprenticeships or university. The work of the EAGaLs is managed by the **Education, Participation and Achievement Manager** who is responsible for the oversight, quality and development of the work of this team.

Our foster families, EAGaLs and Link Workers are focused on the **importance of full-time education**. The right to an education (enshrined in law) is given an exceptionally high priority by our team.

Link Workers and/or EAGaLs help to provide foster families with the skills and knowledge to appropriately address educational challenges and opportunities. Regular education and policy training is offered in all branches for foster parents with frequent follow up in fostering supervision groups.

Where additional support and intervention is necessary, Link Workers or EAGaLs will attend educational meetings to support foster parents and young people alike. In cases that present high degree of challenge and difficulty, the Education, Participation and Achievements Manager supports through advocacy and guidance on all levels.

We advocate for the **child's right to education** funding from local authorities. This includes supporting foster parents to work alongside schools to appropriately target pupil premium funding for their looked after young person to raise their achievement and bridge their gaps.

We **monitor the progress** of young people to ensure they are making timely progress, or are having suitable and appropriate targeted interventions. When progress stalls EAGaLs will progress appropriate actions with virtual schools and the child's social worker to continue to advocate on behalf of the child and family.

We provide a school uniform allowance and a maintenance allowance to cover such things as school equipment and trips, to ensure that children have good quality school uniforms, equipment and are **able to fully engage in school life**.

Foster parents are required to provide transport up to 80 miles a week; longer journeys will be subject to individual arrangements on a 'case by case' basis. EAGaLs can support foster parents to address travel difficulties with virtual schools and children's social workers where this isn't being managed through an EHCP package. EAGaLs will advocate where possible for this to be included in education packages from the offset of a child's educational journey.

Where educational provisions are already in place, we help to sustain the provision if this appears to be in danger. Where a child is referred to us requiring a new educational provision, a mainstream solution will normally be pursued as the preferred option; we will assist the relevant education authorities in identifying a suitable school place and receive all relevant information to enable each child or

young person to obtain a suitable educational provision within the required 20 school days from arrival.

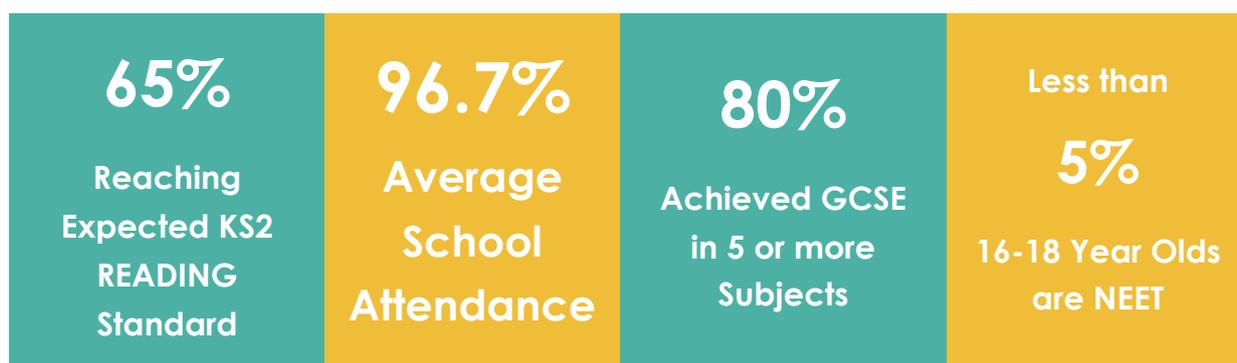
When an educational provision is not in place within the given timescales, the EAGaL will advocate for the child/young person to receive 25 hours per week tuition (preferably delivered in person and outside of the home), at the earliest opportunity. We also advocate for statutory assessments to be carried out where necessary, and can support local authorities to source these from outside of statutory provisions to help reduce waiting times.

We seek to ensure young people are given the opportunity to pursue appropriate further and higher education. EAGaLs across the regions have developed good working links with local universities and will facilitate attendance at open events and widening participation activities to raise aspirations for all of our children.

Where further education is not the most appropriate progression route the EAGaLs actively promote vocational opportunities such as apprenticeships and training programmes through the **Get-a-LifeStyle (GAL) Programme**. We seek to ensure that every young person leaving school is engaged in appropriate education, training or employment and continually monitor educational and other achievement outcomes. Alongside this, EAGaLs provide the opportunity to obtain alternative qualifications such as the range of Arts Awards and the Princes Trust Achieve qualifications (internally provided and delivered by the EAGaL team).

The therapeutic aspect of our work is the thread that binds everything together. This includes underpinning the educative work we do directly – and indirectly - with children and young people. We ensure this is a key part of the service we offer to educational practitioners, enabling them to understand and utilise our therapeutic expertise thereby enhancing the achievement and attainment of our children. Promoting the theoretical underpinnings of understanding attachment, trauma and positive relationships and the utilisation of these to raise achievement and aspirations continues to be a priority for the education team.

Our Impact



During the academic year 2017-2018 BtBwC foster parents looked after a total of **1,188 children and young people** – an increase of 231 young people (24%) on the previous academic year. This includes children who may only have been with us for a few days.

Activities

We provided over 214 activities for our children and young people, these have included;

- Children and Young People's Regional Forum Groups
- Sports activity days including mini Olympics, football, multi-sports
- GaL workshops including emotional wellbeing, drugs and alcohol and CSE
- Seasonal activities, family events and arts & crafts days
- Theme Park / Zoo trips
- Raleigh ROAR Residential and international expeditions
- Skills development workshops including peer education and interviewer skills

| Region | Activities 2017/18 |
|---------------|--------------------|
| South Eastern | 53 |
| Eastern | 29 |
| Thames Valley | 20 |
| West Midlands | 26 |
| East Midlands | 21 |
| North West | 36 |
| Yorkshire | 29 |

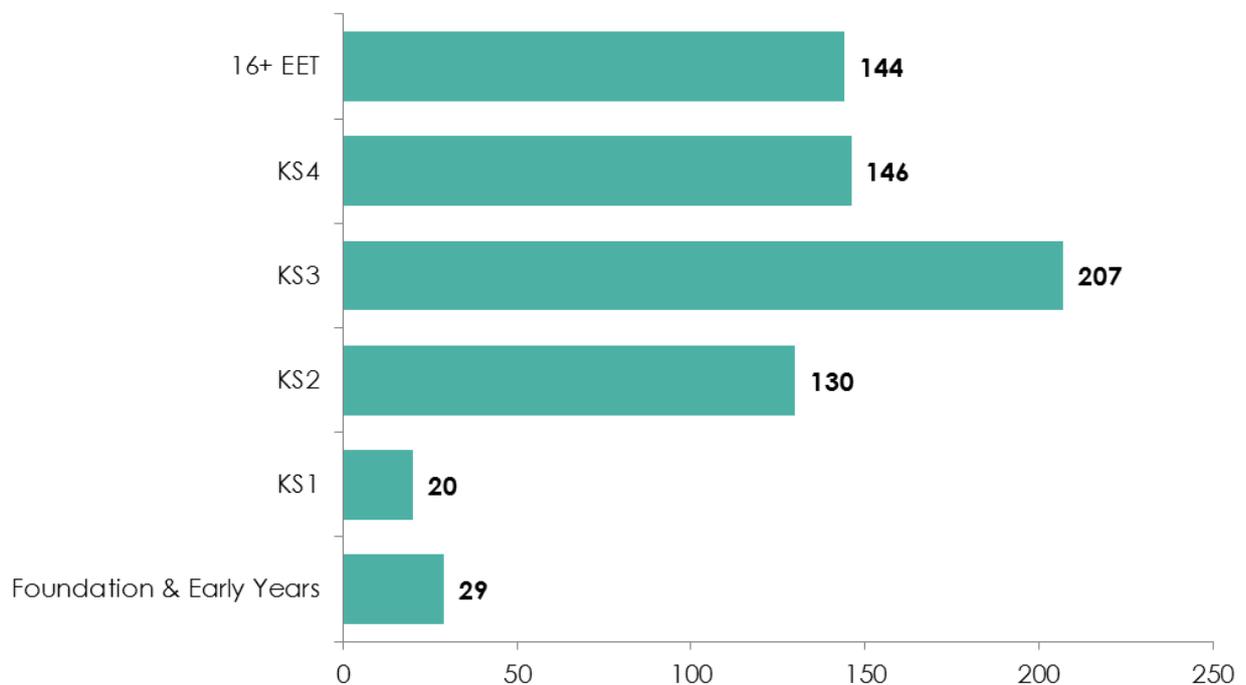
Participation

Alongside these activities and events we also run regular young people's forum groups for consultation, participation and engagement in wider issues. This, coupled with the redesigned annual children and young people's feedback, has afforded us the opportunity to explore child led effective engagement. We are one of eight national pilot organisations for the revised **Hear by Right** Participation Framework. This activity helps inform our participation and engagement strategy as a model of tracking good pieces of active participation and planning a higher level of youth led and informed practice.

- Three of our young people were selected to meet the Minister for Children and Families and the Children's Commissioner. They took part in workshops and a round table discussion on fostering and their input was used in the final report and recommendations.

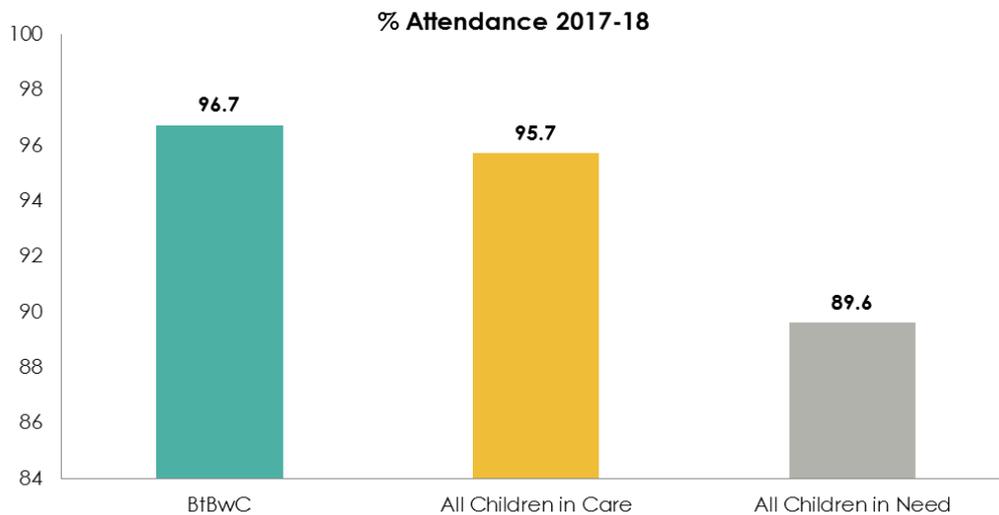
Snapshot by Key Stage

The chart below gives an indication of the breakdown of Key Stages of Children placed with By the Bridge with Cambian on any given day. These figures were taken on 18th September 2018.



School Attendance Figures:

The overall average attendance figure for our young people during the last academic year was **96.7%**. This data has been collated from education reports from schools, colleges and alternative education provisions.



The attendance of looked after children at school has a vital impact on their capacity to achieve throughout their education and beyond. Our children may have experienced an interrupted education; due to their pre-care life experiences and potentially several foster family moves.

Encouraging high levels of attendance through the right educational setting, placement stability, support and guidance begins to redress some of the difficulties brought about by early-disrupted education. This can impact positively on esteem, wellbeing, achievement and attainment.

EAGaLs and the therapeutic training team continue to offer education training, attachment in schools training and individualised, bespoke support including educational therapeutic plans. This further demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our young people are aspirational, and value themselves and their education.

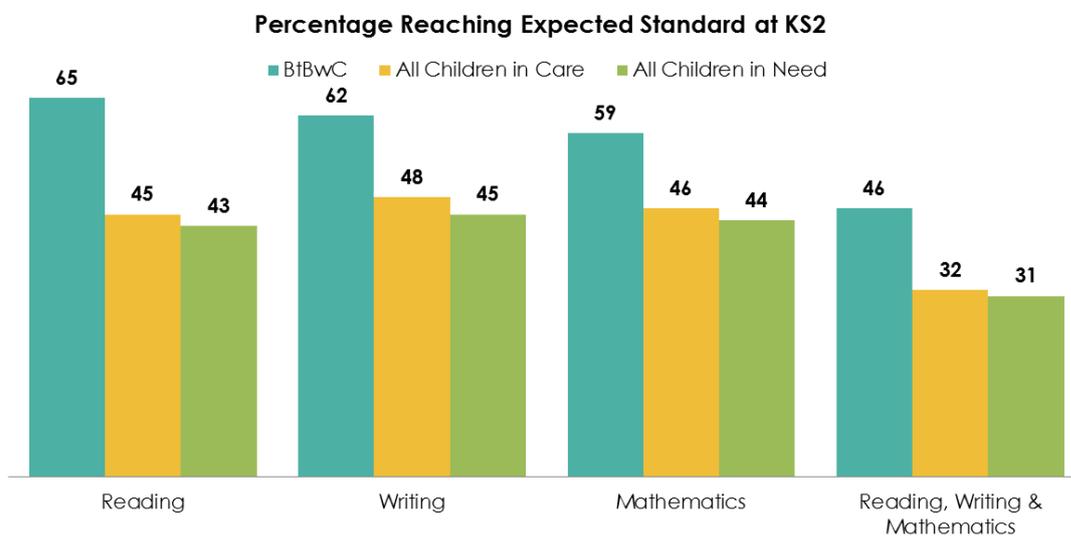
SAT Results:

Nationally children's SAT results are benchmarked, those children achieving over 110 marks on assessment were reported as performing **above expected** level, 100 or above as performing **at expected** level and 85-99 as working **below expected** level. These expectations were set as age related. Broadly speaking, the performance measures are most similar (but not equivalent to) an old level 4b.

Schools have continued to use their own reporting performance indicators that vary widely between provisions. Some schools have reported actual SAT scores; others use measures such as *working towards*, *working at*, or *meeting expectations*. It can be challenging therefore to standardise responses in order to analyse results across all of our children.

To do this, the results were interpreted and reflected using three indicators – Working Above, Working At or Working Below, based on the nearest meaningful phraseology presented by the school or direct scoring mechanisms where available.

In 2017-18, we looked after **37 children** in year 6 who attended mainstream school and were eligible to complete SATs assessments. The data collected for these young people's achievement is displayed overleaf.



Results Analysis and summary

- 65% of BtBwC reached or exceeded the required standard or above in **reading** (national LAC average of 45%).
- 62% of BtBwC reached or exceeded the required standard or above in **writing** (national LAC average of 48%).
- 59% of BtBwC reached or exceeded the required standard or above in **maths** (national LAC average of 46%).

The data shows that in all areas of performance measure for key stage 2, BtBwC children out-perform the national average percentage scores for children in care (SFR 20/2018).

Key Stage 4 Results:

Attainment for children is measured now using **Attainment 8**. This performance measure uses a weighting system of points for a list of eight relevant qualifications.

These qualifications are

- English (double weighted)
- Maths (double weighted)
- Three highest scores from EBacc subjects (see below)
- Three other relevant EBacc subjects scores, or arts/vocational qualifications (from an approved list)

The **EBacc** (English Baccalaureate) is a measure of achievement for children at aged 16. The EBacc quantifies the results of children across five key subjects - English, Maths, Science (at least two sciences – combination from approved list), a foreign language and a humanity (history or geography). In order to achieve an EBacc there must be a grade C (or 4-9) attained in each of these subjects.

“A comparison of Attainment 8 scores between 2017 and 2016 is not possible due to a change in the methodology of allocating points (SFR20/2018)”.

The Department of Education Outcomes for Children Looked After by LA in England 31 March 2018 - SFR 20/2018 - contains the most up to date data for children in care in this country, but was produced using GCSE/Attainment 8 measures from Academic Year 2016/7. Therefore, National Looked after Child Attainment 8 results cannot be meaningfully compared to actual results for BtBwC children sitting exams in Academic Year 2017/18 due to changes in methodology.

In Academic Year 2017/18 **there were 20 BtBwC children** attending mainstream school and entered for GCSE (or alternative) qualifications that are reportable and measurable.

- 80% achieved a GCSE (Grade 1-9) in five or more subjects.
- 20% of our children were entered for the EBacc (compared to 10.4% children in care nationally), with just over half then achieving the EBacc
- 10% of our children achieved the EBacc (compared to a national attainment for looked after children in 2017 of 3.9%)

Recognising Academic Achievement - Case Studies



- LW has been with BtBwC for nearly 2 years. His FP has worked tirelessly with him and he is now extremely settled. LW has worked hard at school and has progressed well. He accessed Pupil Premium funded Maths tuition and managed to improve upon his predicted attainment scores. Attendance has always been very good. Having successfully completed his GCSE's LW is going to College to undertake Level 3 Motor Mechanics.
- JJ has been with BtBwC since April 2012. She has completed her GaL programme with us in 2016 and this year has achieved excellent GCSE results. Although, she said that she did not like school, she has always been committed to her studies, and her Foster Parents have supported and encouraged her to achieve. JJ was well prepared for her PEP meetings, bringing along her own notes to ensure that she never forgot what she wanted to say and was confident in asking for any extra support or resources if she felt she needed them. Foster Parent has provided a strong educational support and JJ is now taking A Levels at college, with aspirations to attend University.
- Education was not something that was on MC's radar of being important. He went to school to socialise and be 'normal'. This led to problems with his behaviour and willingness to engage with any extra work that he needed to do. There was a period when it looked like MC might not achieve at all, but with support from Foster Parents and his EAGaL, his attitude shifted and he started to do what was needed. He found an interest in vocational courses and has returned to his birth family.

Review of Performance Below Expected Level

Some of the children with BtBwC have not performed as well as we would have hoped when assessing progression from KS2 to KS4. Each child's case is different, but analysis of some of the circumstances around the child's experiences is below-

- CG only moved to BTB in 2016. Her new school quickly recognised that she needed extra support, especially in Maths. Pupil Premium was used to fund 1:1 tuition in Maths and small group work for English. CG attendance is now improved, as has her attitude to learning. CG has just attended an award ceremony for completing her NCS and is now looking forward to starting her Level 2 Sport course at college.
- From reading school reports, MC's year 6 levels may have been overstated, however she has always been very confident in her abilities, KS3 & 4 school reports show academically she has struggled especially in Maths. She finds it hard to remember formulas and keep concentration on the tasks set and really struggled in an exam environment. MC attitude to learning has always exceeded expectations, she has always given 100% and worked so hard, she was given extra tuition in the home and extra additional support in school including 1:1 TA support and private tuition but her efforts are not reflected in her results. MC is physically hardworking and has a job as well as a Level 1 college place in Health & Social Care. College are supporting her to re take her Maths as part of her level 1 course.
- EC had many behaviour concerns in late year 10 and early year 11 at school, she was educated offsite for a number of weeks. There was risk of placement breakdown. The foster parents have worked hard to support EC to get herself back on track at school. She was accepted onto a college Hair and Beauty Level 1 course with functional skills Math and English, the subject that EC really enjoys, Art is her strongpoint, and she got a 5!

Post 16 Engagement:

At the end of the academic year 2017/18 BtBwC had 144 young people who were Post 16 – from those there were **7 (5%)** who were not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET). Nationally 6.3% of all young people aged 16-18 are currently NEET.

Current legislation states that all young people should continue in education or training until the age of 18. Over 95% of BtBwC children are engaged in further

education or training. This is reflective of the positive destinations for our children and young people.

We are very proud as an organisation of the hard work that goes into supporting our children and families to ensure that we are able to promote positive outcomes in post 16 engagements. This support is through indirect EAGaL work with their fostering families and educational establishments; direct intervention through action planning and tailor made support to address barriers to their progression.

The support offered by our foster families, EAGaLs and link workers enables positive re-engagement in appropriate provision in a timely manner.

Year 12 & 13 Results:

The results for young people in years 12 and 13 were favourable and reflected the hard work that the young people put in. Young people secured a range of achievements across the country including A Levels in subjects including psychology, sociology and business; BTEC level 1-3 up to distinction level in subjects such as health and social care and performing arts; and a range of additional qualifications such as functional skills and GCSE Maths and English.

Personal Development & Life Skills

Get-a-Lifestyle (GaL) is the unique and bespoke personal development programme that is offered to young people from age 9 onwards living with our families. We want all young people to be fully prepared for living independently, so that they are able to navigate the practical, physical and emotional difficulties that this can bring. To facilitate this, all of our young people are supported to complete the GaL Skills Award. This independence skills development programme looks at financial, practical, social and emotional literacy and skills development. EAGaLs work with foster families and young people to oversee the progress throughout the programme, with the goal of young people completing the Skills Award and receiving their reward (£50 voucher).

The GaL programme has a range of strands that are accessible and inclusive. Every branch offers GaL activities that are creative, engaging and interactive and stretch the parameters of both identity and independence skills development. Examples activities include

- teambuilding sports based workshops that seek to develop understanding of the physical self, emotions and communication;
- raft building and water sports days that promote problem solving and enhance trust and relationships;

- Drama workshops tackling difficult topics like child sexual exploitation and positive relationships.

Young people are able to work alongside EAGaLs to identify future GaL opportunities through young people's feedback, forum groups and 1:1 work. Young people are able to achieve Arts Awards linked into their GaL engagement. Young people have also been able to access additional qualifications and experience through the completion of the Princes Trust Personal Development programme, and partnerships with external organisations such as National Citizenship Service, Raleigh International and The Suzy Lamplugh Foundation.

Young people can complete their Skills Award in one of four ways (or a combination of these):

- **The Booklet** – completed by young people who are supported by foster parents and EAGaLs, primarily those who are visual learners and enjoy working independently.
- **The Checklist** – completed by foster parents to evidence the progress of their young people, supported by selected key bits of evidence (photos, worksheets, Pathway Plans). Useful for young people who are more difficult to engage or find the idea of independence more challenging.
- **Workshops** – 10 workshops in identified key areas attended by young people who prefer kinaesthetic, group work approaches to skills development.
- **Achievement Award** – entirely personalised, target focussed approach for young people who will not be able to live independently due to their high level of need (physical or intellectual).

This model reflects the increasing duty on local authorities to demonstrate robust evidencing of independence skills development.

- A young person who had completed a first aid course under the GaL programme used his new skills to help stabilise a person who had collapsed and subsequently won an award from the local authority.

Recognising Positive outcomes for young people:

There are many positive outcomes for young people that should be celebrated and recognised. Our young people overcome great challenges and difficulties to achieve their individual goals, and these deserve recognition. Each month our foster parents are asked to tell us about the achievements of the children and young people in their care, so that we can 'shout about it', through activities in regional branches, newsletters and Glee Trees/Wheat Ears/Megaphones.

Through this work, we recognise and reward positive outcomes for hundreds of children – here is a selection of them:-

- “DO finds school difficult, with multiple challenges and he can struggle to cope with everyday life. However, at sailing club he presents as a completely different person. He is fully committed and enthusiastic. He won two end-of-season club awards and was runner up in a national competition, for which he received a £2500 grant to further his own understanding, enjoyment and participation in sailing. He is now going to buy his own boat. “
- EB achieved runner up in the Coram Voice National writing competition for Children in Care. This year's theme was *Who or What Makes You Proud*. She wrote a poem about her journey through foster care and then went to an awards ceremony in London to be presented with her award by Peter Capaldi, former Doctor Who.
- HM arrived in this country in June 2017 from Vietnam. He had little to no English when he arrived but great aspirations to learn and do great things in life. Because of his status as a young asylum-seeking person, the process to get him into a school was long and arduous however, he remained patient and worked hard from home with his foster parent to improve his English as best he could. When he did start school, he worked extremely hard, showed particular proficiency for art and maths, and did as many extra revision classes as he could. Subsequently, he achieved a 4 in Maths and a 5 in Art. He was also recognised for his hard work and commitment to learning and awarded a certificate at a school ceremony. He has been granted leave to remain for 5 years and aspires to be a surgeon. He is now in college studying English, and delights in having a conversation with anyone in English. H is a young man destined to do great things and it is lovely to have been a part of it. We are confident he will achieve all he sets out to.
- BS joined BtBwC in 2013 and struggled with literacy and required constant support with spellings, he would need regular encouragement to work independently. After an internal placement move and school change in November 2014, he has flourished since being placed with his new foster parent. He regularly attends BtBwC activities; particularly enjoying anything, sports related i.e. Football. BS has attended numerous forum groups and has completed his GaL Award. Over the last 2-3 years, he has noticeably matured and is a pleasure to have on any activity. He has obtained eight GCSEs and is going to college to pursue his passion, which is sports related.