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Date: 24.03.20 Our ref: Virtual School COVID-19 and CIC

Dear Head Teachers, Designated Teachers and Nominated Governors for Children in Care,

COVID-19 and CIC

I very much appreciate schools are working exceptionally hard in unprecedented circumstances to try to find solutions to the latest Government announcements in relation to school closures while remaining open for the vulnerable students including Children in Care.

Firstly I wanted to reiterate to you all that the Virtual School is here to support you all during this challenging time, in any way we can. Through further consultation with social care colleagues in relation to our Children in Care a joint decision has been made that for CIC who are in stable placements do not need to attend their school. Schools are to provide educational resources which will support their learning at home. Social workers will be in contact with schools directly to clarify where a child in care needs to be supported in school. It is paramount that other vulnerable children and the children of critical workers who we depend upon through this crisis, are given the security and support that the school can offer in this ever changing challenging times.

Attendance

Thank you to all of the schools that have been returning the DfE attendance spreadsheet to the COVID19@telford.gov.uk mailbox, it is reassuring to see that most schools are using this. The Virtual School Team are using the information you return to help track the most vulnerable Children in Care to ensure that they are safe. Please continue to send this in on a daily basis; if you haven't been sharing this, please do, it makes it so much easier to ensure young people are safe.

CIC Self isolating

Schools are required to inform the Virtual School on the first day of a CIC self-isolating due to either (i) showing signs/ symptoms of COV-19 or (ii) members of their household showing signs/ symptoms.

This will enable us to continue to track these pupils and liaise with the relevant professionals.

We also have a comprehensive list of resources which will be shared with foster carers/ parents/ residential placements to support CIC during the self-isolation period.



PEPS

In accordance with the latest government guidance, the Virtual School expects that PEPs already planned for the remainder of the Spring term 2020 will be completed by the Designated Teacher and submitted to the Virtual School. The Designated Teacher can telephone or email the Virtual School Case worker for further advice and support if required. The Designated Teacher can then complete the PEP online as usual and return to the Virtual School Case worker within the agreed timeframe. The Virtual School case worker and the allocated Social Worker will then be in receipt of the completed PEP.

Resources to support CIC

The Virtual School is currently collating a more comprehensive bank of resources to share with schools/ foster carers which will be available on our website by the end of next week. https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20642/virtual_school_for_children_in_care

Going forward, there will continue to be lots of issues to resolve and questions to answer as the situation evolves. The Virtual School team are here to support you with our Children in Care. Please do not hesitate to contact the Virtual School directly for further clarification, advice support and guidance.

Take care, stay safe and healthy

Yours sincerely

Michelle Salter

Virtual School Headteacher