



- virtualschool@telford.gov.uk
- telford.gov.uk/
- facebook.com/TelfordWrekin
- twitter.com/TelfordWrekin
- 01952 381045

Designated Teachers Network - Virtual School - Children in Care

17th October 2019

There have been some changes within the Virtual School Team and this academic year the structure is as follows:

We will no longer be working within localities. Instead across Telford as In borough and Out of Borough, this is to reflect the current education landscape and in line with good practice within Virtual Schools nationally.

Virtual School Head - Michelle Salter
Education Advisor In Borough EY/PLAC 0.8 - Anna Loveland
Education Advisor Post 16 & Out of Borough (OOB) - Lucy Wright
Education Advisor In borough 0.4/ CIC Tracking 0.6 Amanda Price
Education Advisor In borough 0.4 John Newton
Education Officer In borough and PEP Lead - Sarah Summers
Education Officer OOB - Sharron Jones
PEP Coordinator - Kerriann Hughes
BSO - Sarah Herbert

All general enquires to our service mailbox at virtualschool@telford.gov.uk remembering to use initials rather than names in full in any correspondence, or contact the relevant person as listed above.

The role of the **Virtual School for Children in Care** is to champion the needs of Telford and Wrekin's looked after children and previously looked after children wherever they may be placed. This is achieved through support and challenge to schools and other education providers, the local authority, and any other relevant partners to ensure that Children in Care make good levels of progress.

As a Virtual School, we recognise the importance of working closely with schools, parents, social care colleagues and foster carers. This year the Virtual School is aiming to:

- Develop and improve Early Years and Post 16 including PEPs through the work of the Education Advisors
- Build on the Designated Teachers' networks and the Governor Network meetings, to further support schools in particular with the embedding of EPEPS to ensure that the percentage of PEPs graded good or better is above 80%.currently the percentage of PEPS graded good or better is 60%

- Continue to strengthen collaboration with other agencies such as health, social care and the other teams in the local authority. Through this, we hope to provide children and young people with a “seamless offer” and take a holistic approach to each child’s development.
- To raise attainment & progress for all our Children in Care (Outcomes) through effective engagement with partners in improvement of educational outcomes for Children in Care.
- Ensure the Belonging Strategy is embedded into Telford & Wrekin schools practice for our most vulnerable children.
- Encourage schools to be ‘attachment friendly schools’ linked to the Attachment Research Community

Attachment Aware Schools and the Belonging Strategy

A key area for this academic year will be to encourage schools to implement some of the objectives described in the Belonging Strategy, using approaches which suit each individual educational establishment. It is paramount that all children have a sense of belonging. The five priorities link to a variety of training which will be offered this year including Attachment, Emotion Coaching, Youth Mental Health First Aid to name but a few. Check out the CPD brochure and sign up, uptake is already high. A copy of the Belonging Strategy has also been emailed to all Designated Teachers. **We are also encouraging all schools to commit to ARC Attachment Research Community, and you could use your Pupil Premium money to become a member.** Please explore the following link for further information. <https://the-arc.org.uk/>

PEP meetings

Last academic year 2018-2019 saw a significant increase in the number of PEPs completed compared to the previous year’s – from 35% to now 100% of all Children in Care of compulsory school age. We aim to build on this result by continuing to work in close partnerships with all stakeholders. Kerriann Hughes, the VS PEP Coordinator, will coordinate all PEPS - **any changes to PEP dates are to be undertaken by PEP coordinator only.** As always, the best practice being seen is where effective and supportive joint working is taking place. This is also where the feedback from Children in Care is most positive about the experience. Collectively, the number of PEPS graded green and good or better has risen term on term. We aim to work in close partnership to ensure our target of 80% of all PEPS graded good or better is achieved, through robust quality assurance model

Please remember the submission of PEP documents by the deadline, SMART Targets linked to costings, attendance recorded daily on the portal are all essential elements to ensure that your school can continue to receive any funding it might be eligible for in the future. Refer to flow charts for further information.

The Education Advisers’ tasks will be to design and develop an Early Years PEP and a Post 16 PEP. Therefore, if any Designated Teachers would like to input to this please contact the virtualschool@telford.gov.uk and the Education Advisers will be in touch directly.

Therapy support

The Virtual School will continue to explore SEMH commissioning to support our most vulnerable children and young people this academic year. Please contact us directly to discuss further.

Year 6 & Year 11

All DTs to provide update to Case workers in relation to CIC Year groups 6 and 11. Update to include current attainment, if on track to achieve ARE and evidence based interventions currently undertaken to ensure all CIC make at least good progress. Schools can request up to a further £200 in addition to termly PPG to support additional interventions to diminish the difference/ accelerate progress. All requests to be considered should be emailed directly to virtual school inbox **before the 14th November**, evidence of exact costings linked to evidence based interventions (<https://www.suttontrust.com/about-us/education->

[endowment-foundation/teaching-learning-toolkit/](#)) and proposed impact. Schools will be notified of decision at the end of November if additional payments will be authorised.

Expectations

Whilst I fully appreciate that the majority of schools already have effective methods for reporting to the Virtual School, I thought that it would be helpful to outline the key areas for reporting following on from a recent meeting with other Virtual School Headteachers and Ofsted. Ofsted has described the following expectations:

- **Attendance** - must be reported to the Virtual School regularly. Please can schools utilise the Telford and Wrekin school portal to record attendance daily. If you require a user being set up with an account access rights, please provide kerriann.hughes@telford.gov.uk with a name and work email address.
- **Fixed Term Exclusions**- Ideally if a school is considering to issue a FTE to a CIC, can the Designated Teacher/ School please contact the VSH to discuss in the first instance.
 - Last academic year saw a reduction in the number of FTEs issued to CIC. Previously it was significantly higher compared to other regions for CIC.
 - If a FTE is issued, there is an expectation that the local authority is informed. Please can a copy of the FTE letter be sent to accessandinclusion@telford.gov.uk and the Virtual School copied in virtualschool@telford.gov.uk
 - If more than two FTE are issued then a professionals meeting will be called with all relevant stakeholders to ascertain next steps.
- **Modified Timetables** - whatever the nature of a proposed MTT, this should be in consultation with the Virtual School and regularly reviewed.
 - All modified timetables require a parental signature. For Children in Care, this would normally be the Social Worker, but **there is an expectation that the Virtual School agrees this prior to a Social Worker signing.**
 - Pupils who are not accessing full time education and are on part time timetables; this is something that needs to be in consultation with the Virtual School, and reviewed weekly (modified timetables reviewed weekly is an expectation that has been shared by Ofsted). This is the responsibility of school which the CIC is on roll to liaise with the VS regarding number of hours currently received, assurances that safeguarding requirements are met if CIC are not accessing full time education. An agreed plan for increasing the hours, which is reviewed weekly and shared with the Virtual School allocated case worker.
 - School are expected to share copy of MTT & complete the required local authority paperwork and share with accessandinclusion@telford.gov.uk and the Virtual School copied in virtualschool@telford.gov.uk
 -

CIC annual report 18-19

As highlighted in the summer newsflash please can all Designated Teachers' provide the Virtual School with your CIC annual report for last academic year **before October half term.**

Policies

Pupil Premium & CIC policy - these policies have been sent to schools at the beginning of for this academic year for implementation.

Designated Teacher PEP Training

If you are interested in any additional training please contact Sarah Summers PEP Lead in the first instance.

sarah.summers@telford.gov.uk

Dates for your Diary:

12th November	Autumn Nominated Governor Training Sir Alexander Flemming 4-5:30
14th November	National Takeover Day
13th February 2020	Spring Term Designated Teachers Network Charlton School
12th March	Spring Term Nominated Governor Training Wrekin View
7th July 2020	Virtual School Annual Conference Venue TBC

Thank you all, for your ongoing support and commitment, and on behalf of the Virtual School we all look forward to continuing to work closely to support all our children in care.

Michelle Salter
Virtual School Head Teacher
Telford & Wrekin Virtual School