

Education Plans for Previously Looked After Children (EPPLAC)

Rationale and Purpose

- For those in education to be fully aware of the needs and issues faced by previously looked after children and their parents/carers.
- To encourage further positive collaboration across home and school/early years provision.

The following points are emphasised throughout the process: - An Education Plan for Previously Looked after Children (EPPLAC) will only be initiated when parents/carers choose to identify their child's status. - Maintaining confidentiality of information is essential.

Many of our previously looked after children and young people were neglected and/or suffered trauma in their birth families and became looked after children before their final move to join cares or adoptive family. Parents/carers emphasise the need to make school/early years provisions fully aware that their children continue to have the same needs as they had as a Child in Care. Indeed, these issues may have been exacerbated as adoption/SGO is yet another move in their journey. There is also a need to make lasting relationships within their family. This can cause anxieties for children who have had difficulties with relationships and attachments in the past.

Telford and Wrekin has introduced an Education Plan for Previously Looked after Children (EPPLAC). The EPPLAC's main function is as an awareness raising document that ensures that relevant information is available to those who need to know and that effective communication routes are established. It draws on the proactive nature of the Children in Care Personal Education Plan (PEP). The intention of the PEP process is to ensure collaborative planning and support across home, school/early years provision and other agencies. The EPPLAC is not intended to replace other (more reactive) education based plans such as IEPs (Individual Education Plans) or PSPs (Pastoral Support Programmes). One benefit for school/early years provisions is that EPPLACs can provide evidence of how the school/early years provision meets the needs of vulnerable pupils, eg for OFSTED, Governor Reports.

EPPLACs can be initiated by either school/early years provision or parents/carers. The process will establish ongoing reviews. The review date will be set by those attending the meeting- according to the child's circumstances, e.g. 3 months/6months/1 year.

It is intended that the EPPLAC process is initiated when:

- A school/early years provision aged child becomes adopted, i.e. at the last Children in Care Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting before an Adoption Order/SGO is in place.
- The child starts at a new school/early years provision.

However, the process can be initiated at any point should the above not have taken place.

Guidance for Completion of the Education Plan for Previously Looked after Children (EPPLAC).

Prior to the EPPLAC meeting. Copies of the (blank) EPPLAC form and guidance documentation to be distributed to all those attending. Information available at the meeting should include: - Curriculum planning and proposed topics and visits to ensure any sensitive areas are discussed. - available assessment and attainment data - Information on SEN including any additional funding.

During the EPPLAC meeting

The meeting should be chaired by an appropriate member of school/early years provision staff. The staff member will be determined by their role in school/early years provision, their knowledge of the pupil, and previous involvement with the pupil or parents/carers. Parents/carers may choose to invite others (e.g. Adoption Support Worker) to the meeting in discussion with the school/early years provision.

The chair should go through the Rationale and Purpose at the start of each meeting.

Page1. Please ensure all sections are completed.

Page2. Please record all previous and current professional involvement.

Page3. **Significant information:**

This summary, determined by the parents/carers, may include significant details of historic information or views on how experiences in the birth family have impacted on the young person's learning and development.

Areas of Pupil Strength/Need (in and outside of school/early years provision):

Strengths may include maths, sports, music etc. evidenced by specific achievements. Needs may be identified through assessment, observation or discussion and include opportunities to develop particular social skills, eat appropriate food at lunch, complete homework and so on. Other relevant information: this includes looking ahead at proposed curriculum topics/aspects/activities that may need to be treated with additional sensitivity e.g. family trees, sex education, World War 2 evacuees, genetics – eye colour. There may also be issues about staff changes or changes at home that are relevant.

Page 4. **Actions:** the actions are for the adults to carry out to support the pupil either in or out of school/early years provision. They should not duplicate actions already identified in IEPs/PSPs etc. (If these plans are already in place they should be attached to the EPPLAC and be part of the discussion) Actions might include: setting up a playtime observation, organising a more appropriate space for homework, instigating an IEP, monitoring lunchtime eating, opportunities to share out of school/early years provision interests and achievements, arranging summer holiday activities, requesting additional assessments or funding, and so on. It might be especially useful to consider upcoming transitions and any means by which resources and communication can be shared between school/early years provision and home.

Other information: This can include social/emotional/educational/medical information. Examples might include: finding out how a pupil feels about breaktimes and what might make them more successful times; which member of staff do they think helps them manage their feelings; in which areas do they feel they would benefit from additional support, etc. The EPPLAC meeting is for adults but it is crucial that pupil views are sought and represented.

Copies: School/early years provision will give copies of the completed EPPLAC to parents/carers who will decide who else should receive copies, e.g. other school/early years provision staff, Adoption Support Team, other agencies. It is important to agree where in school/early years provision the EPPLAC will be kept and who will have access to it.

Review: those attending the meeting will decide when the EPPLAC needs to be reviewed. This will depend on individual circumstances and needs.

Guidance for Completion of the Education Plan Review for Previously Looked after Children (EPPLAC Review).

The Review is an opportunity to discuss progress, developments or additional information available since the last meeting and to consider what other actions need to be identified.

Process mirrors the initial meeting.

Review of Actions: identify the numbered actions from the initial plan and comment on the outcomes.

Significant changes: these may include a new sibling, house move, contact with birth family, change of Year Group, staff changes, other agency involvement, shifts in peer relationships, etc.

New EPPLAC: A new EPPLAC is recommended for when a pupil changes school/early years provision or there have been significant changes or developments over a period of time.

Transition Arrangements

Transition is often an anxious time for children, and it is important that moves between school/early years provisions are planned carefully and that effective communication routes are established between the current and receiving school/early years provisions, along with the parents and staff. The transitional planning arrangements should commence near the start of the year in which the pupil is transferring to give sufficient time for parents to visit school/early years provision(s) and for school/early years provision staff to ensure appropriate information is exchanged promptly.