Children and Families Service

One Minute Guide

VIRTUAL SCHOOL – A SOCIAL WORKER’S GUIDE

What is it?
All cared for children over 2 Yrs old require a PEP as part of their care plan. A PEP should be held before the first Review meeting (20 days) and then reviewed termly. Responsibilities for initiating, maintaining and implementing the PEP are shared between the Virtual School, Social Worker, and Education Provider with other partners such as Health Visitors, School Nurse for Cared for Children, SEN team and Personal Assistants being involved as appropriate. Where a child has a statement or EHCP the review of this will take place at the same time as one of the PEP meetings.

Why are we doing it?
All cared for children have a named Virtual School Advisor to oversee the case, ensure that the child has access to suitable education and who will challenge schools where progress is inadequate. The school should take the lead on maintaining the PEP and implementing the agreed actions as well as providing data to demonstrate the impact of interventions and support.

When is it happening?
When a child comes into care the Social Worker should:
☐ For a child over 2 yrs: liaise quickly with the Virtual School to arrange the initial PEP.

While a child is in care the Social Worker should:
☐ Attend all PEP meetings to ensure that essential information is correct and that all decisions are conducive to the child’s situation and care plan;
☐ Inform the Virtual School of any issues relating to education where specific support is required.
☐ Inform school and Virtual School if they cannot attend the meeting and re-arrange for another meeting within the school term.

After the PEP meeting the Social Worker should:
☐ Review final version, share as appropriate and note the date of the next meeting.

Where a new school is required the Virtual School will work with the Social Worker, Commissioning and SEN to identify options that meet the child’s needs. Social Worker will then complete the application for mainstream places while SEN will consult for SEN children.

Who is the main contact?
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