

Corporate Parenting Board

Personal Education Plan Update

Karron Young

The aims of the Personal Education Plan changes are to introduce a process that ensures all looked after children from pre-school age to eighteen have a current, high quality, effective PEP which is accessible to education settings, social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs), foster carers and care providers, children and young people and the virtual school.

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) process consisted of a Mosaic work step instigated by the care planning procedure at the time when a child or young person becomes looked after. The initial work step was assigned to the virtual school duty inbox. This was then allocated to the appropriate social worker to initiate the PEP meeting with the child or young person's early years setting, school or college. The system was already in place when the current virtual school headteacher was appointed in September 2018 and PEP completion rates using this system were below 60%. It did not allow designated teachers in education settings to input information was reliant on social workers to attend PEP meetings and then manually complete the form on Mosaic resulting in a PDF download which cannot be quality assured with comments from the virtual school.

A decision was taken following consultation with schools and social care managers to use the work step merely to record PEP dates and to operate a working document (using an editable word file) so that schools and social workers could add to the PEP and pass information between one another by secure email. Completed PEPs were then attached to Mosaic using the paperclip function and can be found in children's files under the attachments section. The virtual school keeps a database of PEP dates and completed (received) PEPs. Current PEP completion rates using this system are 94% across the children's permanence team and 78% across the other children's social care teams.

Over the past 12 months it became evident that the current system was unwieldy and not having an impact on improving educational outcomes for children and young people.

Update

On 24th September 2019 a new ePEP system has been introduced to schools and social workers provided by Welfare Call Ltd. Between now and the end of the Autumn Term it is expected that every child will have an online ePEP. All the latest PEP documents on file with the virtual school have been uploaded to the ePEP system for reference by schools and social workers to review the latest targets. Completed ePEPs should be downloaded from the Welfare Call Extranet and attached children's records on Mosaic. The current PEP work step needs amending so that it is simpler to record the date and run completion/timeframe reports. This will be actioned in January 2020 after the transition period.

The ePEP has been developed using existing templates provided by Welfare Call Ltd and adapted to capture the education journey for children in nursery settings, statutory school age and post-16 learners. The Chair of the Show Me That I Matter group worked with the virtual school headteacher to agree the content of each template and especially the child's contribution section. Early feedback from children and young people is that they are in favour of the new system and like the way the ePEP records their views, wishes and feelings about education.

The ePEP does not become completed until the virtual school has signed off the quality and provided feedback to both social workers and schools. This is through a Red, Amber, Green rating with comments. As the system is fully automated and behind a protected firewall this has greatly reduced the need for email traffic between all parties and is compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The virtual school should have a system in place to ensure that PEPs are of high quality and that they are reviewed regularly (on a termly basis). This new system automatically reminds both schools and social workers when the PEP is due for review and the electronic nature of the software also allow reports to be generated regarding children and young people's learning needs and Pupil Premium Plus requests for additional support.

The new ePEP system and attendance monitoring service provided by Welfare Call Ltd will enable the virtual school headteacher to ensure there are effective systems in place to:

- maintain an up-to-date roll of its looked-after children who are in school or college settings, and gather information about their education placement, attendance and educational progress;
- ensure sufficient information about a child's mental health, SEN or disability is available to their education setting so that appropriate support can be provided;
- ensure social workers, designated teachers and schools, carers and IROs understand their role and responsibilities in initiating, developing, reviewing and updating the child's PEP and how they help meet the needs identified in that PEP;
- ensure up-to-date, effective and high quality PEPs that focus on educational outcomes, and that all looked-after children, wherever they are placed, have such a PEP;
- ensure the educational achievement of children looked after by the authority is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare; and
- report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of looked-after children through the authority's corporate parenting structures

These duties are taken directly from the statutory guidance for local authorities: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

The first ePEPs completed by schools and social workers using the Welfare Call system are already more detailed and of better quality than the previous system and the virtual school headteacher is confident that this will lead to better outcomes for the children and young people in our care.

Karron Young
Virtual School Headteacher