

Personal Education Planning

Process and Responsibilities

A guide for Children's Social Care, Schools, Carers and other agencies and services supporting children who become looked after

This guide is essential reading for:

- Designated Teachers
- Social Workers

Introduction

All looked after children, whether or not currently in education (pre-school to age 18) must have a personal education plan (PEP), which is an integral part of their care plan. For children aged 16 - 18 this forms part of the Pathway Plan. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a looked after child to enable them to make expected progress and fulfil their potential. The Virtual School Head should ensure that all children who are looked after by Slough Children's Services Trust wherever they are placed, have an up-to-date, effective and high-quality PEP that focuses on educational outcomes.

Slough Children's Services Trust uses the ePEP system; a secure database which records and files PEPs for Slough looked after children. Designated teachers and social workers will only have access to the children on their caseload to maintain confidentiality at all times.

This document outlines the process for the PEP and the responsibilities of the Social Worker and Designated Teacher for Looked After Children in schools. Early Years settings and FE Colleges are not required to have Designated Teachers, but in Early Years settings this responsibility will usually be assigned to the Lead Practitioner for safeguarding. Across FE Colleges this responsibility is held by different members of staff; usually the course tutor or key worker for the young person. The VSH – supported by the Slough Virtual School team – is responsible for ensuring PEP compliance and quality assurance.

Initiating the PEP

When a child first becomes looked after, wherever they are placed, the Virtual School will initiate the first PEP. Thereafter, the Social Worker is responsible for initiating the remaining PEPs for the academic year. The Social Worker must contact the Designated Teacher at the child's school to arrange the PEP meeting and pre-populate the ePEP for the child before the meeting with the following information:-

- the child's personal information (including legal status);
- carer/s information
- decision-making and contact responsibilities.

The Social Worker is also responsible for arranging the attendance of parent/s, carers and other professionals at the PEP meeting if necessary (e.g. supervising social worker, SEN Officer, CAMHS worker). The Designated Teacher should assist in arranging for other professionals at school to attend.

The Virtual School will ensure the Designated Teacher will receive log on details and instructions for the ePEP system. It is the responsibility of the Designated Teacher to pre-populate the ePEP before the meeting with the following information:-

- the child's educational data and information, including information about SEN (with or without a statement or EHCP)
- any part – time or alternative timetable arrangements
- attendance, punctuality and details of any fixed term exclusions;
- targets already in place and progress towards these;
- support or interventions already provided to meet needs;
- health and emotional well-being
- plans for education, employment or training if age appropriate (14 – 19 yrs)

If for whatever reason the ePEP cannot be updated before the meeting the expectation is that the Social Worker and Designated Teacher will update after the meeting has taken place. If the information is not recorded without an explanation given to the Virtual School it will not be signed off by staff within the Virtual School team.

Giving the child a voice

In the development of a child's PEP it is essential that arrangements are in place to take account of the child's views, according to age and understanding, in identifying and meeting their educational needs. The Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the child's voice is heard at the PEP meeting and this can be achieved in different ways, according to the child's wishes. The Designated Teacher will need to consider if the child requires the support of a translator and if the child requires additional support with speech, language and communication to ensure his or her voice is heard. There is a section within the ePEP for the child/young person to complete named 'Young Persons View' which covers the following topics:-

- feelings about school
- feelings about learning
- relationships with teachers
- relationships with peers
- how the child/young person feel about themselves
- talents and interests
- future aspirations and needs

The child/young person can complete this section alone or with the support of the Designated Teacher, Teaching Assistant or another appropriate professional depending on the child/young person's wishes.

Where appropriate the Social Worker should arrange with the Designated Teacher for the child to attend the PEP meeting. It is essential that the views that the child expresses at the meeting are recorded in the PEP.

If the child will not be attending the PEP meeting and does not engage in completing the "*Young Persons View*" section then the Designated Teacher and Social Worker must ensure that the child's views are captured in some other way so that the child's voice is heard at the PEP meeting and considered in the development of the PEP.

Moving schools

Where a new PEP is being initiated because a child who is already looked after by Slough Children's Services Trust is moving school the Social Worker must also ensure the new Designated Teacher has access to ePEP.

Designated Teachers are responsible for ensuring that the child's educational records are transferred to the new school (the school that the child has begun/will begin attending). The VSH will support the Designated Teacher at the new school in obtaining these records, where requested.

Timescales

When a child becomes looked after, wherever they are placed, the Virtual School will contact the social worker and school to initiate the PEP meeting straight away. The PEP meeting must be held and recorded within 20 days of the child/young person coming into care. Thereafter the social worker will initiate the remaining PEP's for the academic year. A PEP review should be held at least once a term, a minimum of 3 times a year. However PEP meetings can be take place more than once a term if a significant event occurs, i.e. a change of school.

The Social Worker must ensure that the VSH is regularly updated with progress. It is important that Social Workers take into account school holidays in planning PEP meetings and the impact that these will have on the completion of PEPs within the above timescales. Where school holidays or any other circumstances impede the completion of a child's PEP within these timescales the Social Worker must inform the VSH so that a course of action can be agreed.

In exceptional circumstances when a child does not have a school place within 20 working days of becoming looked after, the Social Worker must liaise with the VSH to put in place a pre-admission PEP that records the progress with securing a school place. It should also detail interim arrangements that have been put in place to secure education for the child/young person until he or she commences school.

The PEP Meeting

The PEP meeting will be held at the child/young person's school unless the child/young person has specifically requested the meeting to take place elsewhere. The Designated Teacher should lead the PEP meeting as he or she is responsible for ensuring that it is an effective tool to help the school support the child's educational progress. The Social Worker should support the Designated Teacher to ensure that the child's voice is heard within the meeting and considered in developing the PEP.

The ePEP should provide the agenda for the PEP meeting, though as a guide a suggested agenda for the meeting is provided (see page xx). The completed ePEP should also be a record of the meeting – it is not necessary to maintain a separate record or to take minutes of the meeting unless the ePEP is not updated within the PEP meeting.

All PEPs must include short-term and long term-targets that are SMART (see page 6) and evidence how pupil premium is being used to improve the child's educational achievement. Pupil Premium must follow the child/young person; it must be used to meet his/her needs and improve his/her educational achievement – it cannot be used centrally or "strategically" (for more information see the Slough Virtual School Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy, September 2016). The Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the targets are completed and updated.

The PEP should be completed at the meeting; however if any finalisation is required to complete the document (e.g. inserting data discussed at the meeting or handwritten notes) the Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring that this is done as he or she is responsible for leading on the development of the PEP. The following sections should be updated in the meeting if possible:-

- The PEP Meeting (Summary)

Once the ePEP has been signed off by the Virtual School the Social Worker must upload the finalised document to ICS or support the Business Support Officer to complete this task.

The Virtual School will quality assure all PEPs that are submitted for signing off. The Virtual School will not sign off the PEP if the following sections are not completed without explanation given from the school or social worker:-

- Attainment – this is crucial for tracking the progress of our young people individually and as a group
- Young Persons View – the child/young person has the option to not express their views if they wish; however if this is the case this must be clearly noted in the PEP. As noted above every effort must be used to obtain the child/young person's views to inform the PEP.
- Targets – these should be SMART and aspirational (see setting SMART targets section)
- Health and Emotional Wellbeing – any strengths and difficulties are identified and how they will be met is clear
- The PEP Meeting (Summary)

For any advice please contact the Virtual School.

PEP Review and Development

Where an initial PEP is already in place and the PEP meeting is held to review the child/young persons progress the process and responsibilities remain the same. The Social Worker must check and ensure the following information is updated in ePEP before the meeting.

- the child's personal information (including legal status);
- social worker and carer/s details
- decision-making and contact responsibilities.

The Designated Teacher should be informed of any changes of people attending the PEP meeting.

The Designated Teacher must check and update the following information before the meeting and also make sure the child's voice is captured:-

- the child's educational data and information, including information about SEN (with or without a statement or EHCP)
- any part – time or alternative timetable arrangements
- attendance, punctuality and details of any fixed term exclusions;
- targets already in place and progress towards these;
- support or interventions already provided to meet needs;
- health and emotional well-being
- plans for education, employment or training if age appropriate (14 – 19 yrs)

Suggested Agenda for PEP Meeting

- **Introductions**
- **Background Update**
 - legal status and care plan
 - key dates (e.g. LAC Review, court hearings)
 - contact information and responsibilities for decision-making
 - health needs and medication
- **Education**
 - attendance, punctuality, behaviour and fixed term exclusions
 - celebrating achievements
 - information about SEN
 - attainment, progress and targets – review existing/previous targets
 - cultural, religious, personal, social and behavioural needs
 - involvement of other agencies and services (e.g. CAMHS, EP, therapy)
 - consider reports from other agencies and services
 - extra-curricular activities (school-based and outside school)
- **Child's voice**
 - child participates in meeting
 - *"My views about my PEP"* or other record of the child's voice shared
 - meeting listens to, discusses and considers child's voice
- **Targets**
 - set new targets linked to other school-based targets (e.g. IEP)
 - agree short-term and long-term targets
 - ensure that all targets are SMART (see page 6)
- **Support and Interventions**
 - review those already in place
 - determine any changes or new interventions
- **Use of Pupil Premium**
 - use of pupil premium considered and discussed
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 - use must be based on need and linked to SMART targets or other outcomes
- **Actions**
 - Clear actions, with responsibilities and deadlines/timelines (what, who and when)
- **Next PEP meeting**
 - Agree date, time and attendance
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Setting SMART Targets

Effective, high-quality PEPs should:

- identify developmental and educational needs in relation to skills, knowledge, subject areas and experiences;
- include **SMART short-term targets**, including progress monitoring of each of the areas identified against development and educational needs;
- include **SMART longer-term plans** for educational targets and aspirations; and
- identify actions, with time scales, for specific individuals to support the achievement of agreed targets.

Defining SMART

S

specific

significant

stretching

M

measurable

meaningful

motivational

A

agreed

achievable

action-orientated

R

realistic

relevant

results-orientated

T

time bound

tangible

trackable