



# Learn Achieve Celebrate

A bulletin for Designated  
Teachers of Looked After  
Children  
in Northumberland

NORTHUMBERLAND  
Northumberland County Council

Issue 13, Autumn 2017

Hello and welcome to a new academic year and a new look for Northumberland's Virtual School. It's going to be a busy year with some significant changes for us both locally in Northumberland and nationally with the DfE. Please make sure you take note of the messages here and share with your Headteacher, Governors and other members of staff as appropriate. Any questions, please contact us on **01670 622779** or visit our [Virtual School](#) webpage.

## Pupil Premium Plus

The first Pupil Premium Plus payments will be transferring to schools/academies during the next few weeks. Please make sure you have completed the Pupil Premium Plus agreement in each looked after child's PEP so that the process is as smooth as possible. If in doubt, contact your ESLAC worker.

The **income code** for receiving Pupil Premium Plus into your budget is school cost centre **300014 ED10PL**. If you are receiving the PP+ directly from the ESFA for eligible adopted children then the income code is the same.

**For the next financial year, 2018-19**, there will be further changes to the Pupil Premium Plus as a consequence of the new national funding formula for schools and the Family and Social Work Act 2017. The DfE has confirmed that support for looked after children and children who were previously looked will be targeted through the Pupil Premium Plus, rather than through a looked after children factor in the national funding formula.

The total amount spent through Looked After Children (LAC) factors in local formulae in 2017-18 has therefore been transferred from the Dedicated Schools Grant to the Pupil Premium Plus budget. As a result of this transfer, the 2018-19 **Pupil Premium Plus rate will be £2 300**.

The DfE will shortly update the schools' operational guidance for 2018-19 to reflect this, and I will communicate with you further after that about arrangements in Northumberland from April 2018.

## Statutory guidance for Designated Teachers and local authorities

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 expanded the role of both Virtual School Heads and designated teachers to include the provision of information and advice to certain previously looked after children and their families. Those changes will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and will be outlined in revised statutory guidance. A DfE consultation on the revised statutory guidance for Designated Teachers and local authorities opened this week seeking views on changes to two statutory guidance documents: *Promoting the education of looked after children*; and *Roles and responsibilities of designated teachers for looked after children*.

The consultation will run from 16/10/17 until 27/11/17 and can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/revised-guidance-for-virtual-school-heads-and-designated-teachers>

When published ready for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 I will launch the guidance with you at a series of conferences arranged in Northumberland. The dates and venues will be shared with you in the December newsletter.

### Working with Year 6 looked after learners

At our network meeting with Designated Teachers of Year 6 pupils at the beginning of September we were joined by Neil Jones, Deputy Headteacher at Newsham Primary School. Neil took us on a tour of [the learning zone](#) area of the school's website to share **resources which work well with Year 6 looked after learners**. The recommendations include:

- Mathematics
- Education City
- Swaffield website

Many of the resources focus on establishing and developing relationships through reading, which is beneficial for our looked after learners. Many thanks to Neil for his advice and guidance.

During the year we are holding network sessions for Designated Teachers by year group. We know there will be some overlap, but the idea is to make the sessions more focussed on the needs of pupils of particular ages. It is really important that we get the chance to meet with you and that you hear first hand what is happening from an education perspective for this group of disadvantaged learners. Please make the time to attend a network meeting this year. A reminder of dates and locations is below – contact Adele (01670 622779) to let us know you can attend:

<b>Meeting the needs of looked after learners in Year 9</b>	17 Jan 18	West Hartford Fire Station, Cramlington
<b>Meeting the needs of looked after learners in Year 6</b>	8 Feb 18	tba
<b>Meeting the needs of looked after learners in Year 11</b>	21 Feb 18	West Hartford Fire Station, Cramlington
<b>Meeting the needs of looked after learners in Year 2</b>	28 Feb 18	West Hartford Fire Station, Cramlington
<b>Meeting the needs of looked after learners in Year 4</b>	14 June 18	West Hartford Fire Station, Cramlington
<b>School readiness for Reception pupils</b>	12 July 18	West Hartford Fire Station, Cramlington

Next half term you will be able to access a training module on the virtual learning platform Learning Together for Designated Teachers for Looked After Children. It is induction and refresher training so highly recommended for you in your role, but also appropriate for all teachers in your school who work with or teach looked after children. Details of how to access the module will follow once the module is live.

### Participation survey with looked after children

As part of our 'Promise' as corporate parents to our looked after children, the Participation team recently conducted a survey to gather the views of our children on their experiences in care. Approximately 100 children participated, of which 79% said they know who their Designated Teacher is and 71% said they are coping well/very well at school or college. We can discuss in more detail the content and lessons to be learned from the survey at our forthcoming network meetings.

*Jane Walker, Virtual School Headteacher*