



# Learn Achieve Celebrate

## Information and guidance

for Designated Teachers of Looked After and  
Previously Looked After Children in Northumberland

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

### EXTRAORDINARY CORONAVIRUS SCHOOL CLOSURE BRIEFING

#### THANKYOU!!

A huge and sincere thank you from everyone at the Virtual School to all of our Designated Teachers. You have all been superstars during this period of school closure. Our looked after children are lucky to have you.

#### Easter holiday arrangements

There has been some fantastic work taking place between Designated Teachers and the Virtual School regarding school places and provision over the Easter holidays. Approximately one fifth of our looked after children will continue to attend school for the next two weeks. It may be that the arrangements we have in place today might change as the holiday progresses. Thank you in advance for your co-operation if we need to review school placements for any children. And if you know of any changes to plans at school then please let us know asap. If a looked after child is expected but doesn't attend on any one day, please follow *the children missing from education during school closure protocol*– see below.

No school should be left to be lone decision makers about a child's safety within their home and whether they need to attend school. If you are concerned about any looked after child and whether or not they should be in school, please contact us immediately. The Virtual School and social worker will fully support schools to risk assess any concerns.

The Virtual School is 'open' throughout the whole Easter holiday period. Get in touch with us if you need us!

**01670 622779**

**[Eslac.info@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Eslac.info@northumberland.gov.uk)**

#### Children missing from education during school closure

A reminder that there is still a children missing protocol in place even though schools are closed. For looked after children, Designated Teachers should work with DSLs on a daily basis to:

- Make sure they know which children on their school roll/AP register have a social worker (contact Vicky Kinneavy for clarification if necessary) and/or and EHCP
- Know who to expect at school/provision each day
- If an expected child doesn't arrive then contact home - parent/carer (ie carry out the usual reasonable checks for CME)
- If you can't make contact then contact the social worker and education welfare ([educationwelfare@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:educationwelfare@northumberland.gov.uk))

If you have significant concerns about a child who is either expected to attend or who is currently at home, then you should contact OneCall in the usual way – 01670 536400.

## School moves during school closure period

As some schools start to close and school hubs start to emerge, there may be times where looked after children are required to attend other school sites. Other reasons might include school holidays if their usual schools close or if their residential placement breaks down and they are moved to another part of Northumberland. *These moves do not require a change in school roll.* In these instances, we will work with both schools to ensure this unplanned move is managed in a timely manner which fully supports the looked after child and other pupils within your school.

[Government guidance](#) has been published to make sure the appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to support these moves and the Schools' Safeguarding Team has published a [checklist for schools](#) based on the guidance. Schools need to ensure that all child protection information and the most recent PEP is transferred, along with an up to date PEP 1.

## PEPs – more important than ever

The PEP is a statutory requirement and needs to be maintained and used now more than ever. We want to work with you to *manage expectations while maintaining aspirations*. Meetings can be held virtually or via telephone. It is so very important to include social worker and pupil views.

Outcomes may need to be amended to reflect the current unusual circumstances which are now part of each looked after child's story. An additional emotional wellbeing outcome may be needed, however academic outcomes are still required even if you have to be imaginative with how you write these. Please use your professional judgement but contact us if there are any concerns or queries.

Please remember PP+ as this can be used to support home learning packages, which can be creative and may engage those finding it difficult to feel motivated at home.

While schools are closed to normal business we are continuing to work on the ePEP to make it more user friendly. You might have already noticed that on the *Outcome* tab you can now see the full list of outcomes and actions, rather than one line. This makes it easier to read, action and navigate. The latest release of the e-PEP unfortunately encountered glitches, we hope these have all been removed, if you do find any more any please let us know.

There will be a new release within the next month with additional features and the quality assurance audit tool will be in the ePEP rather than a separate Word document. More information about this will follow.

## Transition arrangements September 2020

Work is underway to make sure that pupils who are moving schools for September 2020 experience a smooth transition. Resources are being developed by the ESLAC team and our Educational Psychologists for foster carers and Designated Teachers which we will share with you after the Easter holiday.






## Laptops






The Virtual School is working hard to make sure that all looked after children have a laptop or have access to one in their home placement to fully support education from home. For obvious reasons we have had a delay in getting these and are waiting for the security software to be installed before getting them to children. We hope that by the end of the Easter holidays that everyone will have access. If you know of any looked after children that are struggling due to technology, please get in touch with us.

## myON winners

We have our first myON reading challenge winners. The pupils and their schools will be notified, but they attend St. Wilfrids RCVA Primary School and Cramlington Learning Village. Unfortunately we didn't have any participants from our special schools...next time!

## Advice from our Educational Psychologists

				
KEEP CONNECTED	RESPECT YOURSELF	CHALLENGE YOUR MINDSET	TAKE A MOMENT	TALK THINGS OVER
<p>Find creative ways to stay in touch with friends and important people e.g. letters, e-mails, virtual calls, online games</p>	<p>Know that it is ok to not be ok. This is an extremely challenging situation for everyone. Be kind to yourself and respect that your feelings about the situation are valid.</p>	<p>F - Focus on what is in your control                      A - Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings                      C - Come back into your body (mindfulness)                      E - Engage in what you are doing</p>	<p>Carve time out of each day to stop, breathe, and do something which makes you feel calm. It might be listening to music, yoga or art. Or it could be something brand new.</p>	<p>Make sure that you take time during the day to share your thoughts in some way. That might be talking to someone face-to-face or on the phone, or it might be writing them down. Try not to 'bottle things up', sharing our thoughts helps us make space in our heads for thinking about other things.</p>

				
GET ACTIVE	MAKE A DIFFERENCE	LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE	BE KIND TO OTHERS	HAVE A GOAL
<p>Be creative about getting active - this might be in the garden or it might be a short walk from home. Try something new, there are lots of classes and videos online.</p>	<p>Focus on all the positive community actions that are happening at the moment e.g. 'clap for the NHS'. Can you help?</p>	<p>There will be an end to this difficult situation. Maybe think about some of the things you will be grateful for afterwards and what you are looking forward to.</p>	<p>Try and think positive thoughts and comment about the nice things that people around you are doing.                       Think about what you might be able to do to make others smile e.g. writing letters, drawing pictures or helping out.</p>	<p>Maybe you would like to learn something new?                       Maybe you want to make a plan for afterwards?                       Or maybe you just want to make a list of things you would like to do during the day. Having a structure like this and something to aim for is helpful.</p>

## Hello and Goodbye

At the end of March we said our virtual goodbyes to Adele Stevens who has taken early retirement. Adele has worked with ESLAC since 2003, knows all of you and our children very well, and will be hugely missed by us all.

We have also had a change to the Virtual School teacher 'team'. Carolyn Henzell-Hill and Lorna Pringle are now working with EOTAS Health Needs children again, and Deborah Aubrook has joined Karen Jeff at ESLAC to be the primary to her secondary teacher role.

## Government guidance – updates this week

Updates to government guidance have been published this week, all relevant to your DT role:

- Guidance on safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers (published 27 March 2020) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>
- Guidance on vulnerable children and young people (updated 27 Mar 2020 - Updated the following sections of the guidance: 13, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27 and 30) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>
- Guidance for schools on temporary closing (updated 27 March 2020 - Updated questions on 'How are vulnerable children defined', 'What should schools do if vulnerable children do not attend school' and what public health advice should schools follow') <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing>
- Guidance on supporting children's mental health and wellbeing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>
- Free school meals guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>

## Key contacts

There will be teams and services that you need to support during this school closure period. Hopefully this initial list of contact details will help, let us know if you need any others:

- Department for Education coronavirus helpline 0800 046 8687. 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday. 10.00am to 4.00pm Saturday and Sunday
- OneCall 01670 536 400
- CYPS 01670 502 700 (CYPS, prescriptions, crisis)
- Family Placement 01670 626 262
- IRO's (Independent Reviewing Officers) 01670 624888
- SEND 01670 623 555
- SEND Co-ordinators:
  - **Sarah Jeremiah** for Ashington, NCEA, Morpeth, Ponteland and Berwick schools: [Sarah.Jeremiah@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Jeremiah@northumberland.gov.uk), Tel 01670 622 760
  - **Dawn Glass** for Cramlington, Amble, Hexham, Prudhoe, Alnwick and Haydon Bridge schools: [Dawn.Glass@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Dawn.Glass@northumberland.gov.uk), Tel 01670 624 657
  - **Jannine Baxter** for Blyth, Bede, Bedlington and Astley schools: [Jannine.Baxter@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Jannine.Baxter@northumberland.gov.uk), Tel 01670 622 752