



# Learn Achieve Celebrate

## Information and guidance

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

April 2019



### Summer Conference for Designated Teachers

You are all invited to attend the Virtual School's Summer Conference! We want you all to join us for a day to hear what you need to know about your Designated Teacher role, the refreshed offer of support available from the Virtual School for 2019-20 and to develop a deeper understanding of 'what works' with looked after children.

So that you might all be able to attend, the conference will be repeated 3 times in 3 different locations in Northumberland, it will be free of charge to Designated Teachers and lunch will be provided.

The agenda includes:

- ✓ Writing a great PEP (setting SMART outcomes, using PP+, quality assurance)
- ✓ A year in the life of a Designated Teacher
- ✓ High expectations and tracking pupil progress
- ✓ What it's like to be a looked after child in Northumberland
- ✓ Our Reading Campaign
- ✓ Understanding and meeting the needs of previously looked after children
- ✓ What we do and the way we do it – the Virtual School offer of support 2019-20

I am pleased to confirm that we will have two guest speakers – **Adam Hall** (Northumberland's Designated Officer and IRO), and **Kyle Rogerson** (Northumberland Care Leaver and Young Ambassador for the regional children in care council).

Dates, times and places are:

- ✓ Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 9.30am-3.30pm, The Fuse Prudhoe
- ✓ Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 9.30am-3.30pm, Berwick Workspace Berwick upon Tweed
- ✓ Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July, 9.30am-3.30pm, West Hartford Fire Station Cramlington

**TO BOOK PLEASE EMAIL ESLAC:**

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

## Are you fulfilling the statutory requirements of your Designated Teacher role?

**Annex 1** at page 36 of the revised [statutory guidance for Designated Teachers](#) is a very useful resource to ensure that you are fulfilling all aspects of your newly broadened role.

Every half term your *Learn, Achieve, Celebrate* briefing will draw attention to the Annex so that you can reflect on those *useful questions in developing effective practice*. The spotlight in April's edition is on:

### Exclusions

What strategies does the school use to avoid exclusion of vulnerable children including looked after and previously looked after children?

When considering exclusion, does the head teacher and the governing body have regard to the DfE's guidance on exclusions?

Is there any trend in exclusion rates of looked after and previously looked after children?

Is the appeal process fully explained to social workers, foster carers, residential social workers, parents and guardians when a looked after or previously looked after child is excluded?

Are young people in care encouraged to attend governors' hearings which are reviewing their exclusion?

Has the appropriate person/team in the local authority with responsibility for children missing education been notified of the child's exclusion?

What are the reintegration arrangements for looked after and previously looked after children who have been excluded?

What other agencies are working with the child, and have they delivered the necessary support eg educational or clinical psychology/CYPS?

Where a looked after child is at risk of exclusions does their PEP include pastoral support provision?



It's been a long journey but we are nearly there with the implementation of the ePEP. Thank you for your continued patience.

When you return from your Easter holiday the online template will have been updated with changes we wanted to make after listening to your feedback and using the ePEP ourselves. It is intended that these will be the last changes until we review the template again in 12 months' time.

Visit the website and log into your ePEP account [here](#).

**Find out more about what the ePEP can do and what's different by coming to our Summer Conference.**

Are you making, or thinking of making, a request to the SEND assessment team for STAR, COSA or EHCP? If so, then please copy the ESLAC Assistant Team Manager **Tara Prescott** ([tara.prescott@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:tara.prescott@northumberland.gov.uk)) into your emails. If Tara knows about your request or application then she can track and try to progress as a priority through the system.



## FROM ME TO YOU– ten small changes can make a big difference

Here are ten small changes that all class teachers can make to their practice which can make a very big difference to my education.

The ideas are evidence informed, based on research that included the voices of pupils in care in primary and secondary schools across the north east of England.

You can find out more about the research by following [this link](#).

When	Small Change	Example of what pupils said	Why this is relevant to looked after children
<b>BEFORE</b> a lesson	1. <b>Get to know me</b>	<i>It did help that she was the PEP person as well. [Read through my Personal Education Plan to find out more about my strengths, areas for development (additional needs) and what I am happy for you to know.]</i>	In the past the child may have been or felt rejected, leading to feelings of low self-worth and a difficulty with forming relationships and trusting others. Getting to know the child and building a trusting relationship with them will help to rebuild their constructs of relationships. For example, using their name shows them that they are worthy of being known and that you think that they are important.
	2. <b>Consider the subject content</b> of lessons and any implications for my learning and possible wellbeing	<i>Sometimes I think when I look back to my Year 7 history and I used to do family trees... I now think actually that wasn't a very sensitive thing to do if you think about it.</i>	The child may get embarrassed or have feelings of shame when lessons refer to families, for example in MFL when having to talk about family and draw a family tree. Please be sensitive to content of lesson and language used. It will not help if you refer to “parents” for example. Be careful around Mother’s Day / Father’s Day.
	3. Hold and demonstrate <b>high expectations of me</b> at all times	<i>Say I'm finding one thing easy, I like being stretched to a difficult thing. But when I'm finding it difficult then I'm getting stretched even further.</i>	This will show that you believe in the child - in the past they may have come across adults who shown them the opposite, and who do not care about their future. By having high expectations of them this tells them that you think they can become something.
	4. <b>Treat me like all the other pupils</b> - but show that I belong	<i>She didn't single me out. It was just like if she saw something was wrong she would ask me if I'm OK and if I wanted to talk about it. But she did that with all students. She was just really kind and easy to talk to.  I had my art teacher, he was amazing. Then I had my science teacher who literally...he made science interesting for me. I had him from Year 9 through to Year 11 and he was just a really good teacher. He was the teacher that you could go to about anything and not be embarrassed about it.  She was calm and quiet and she rarely raised her voice.</i>	Because of ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) the child may have a range of complex needs which are not always obvious, and their brain, at certain times of perceived threat, may be in the fight or flight mode. This may make them withdrawn or aggressive. It is important that you know this and understand this. They want to belong, but don’t want to be treated differently. The child needs to know that you understand. There are environmental factors that can trigger unconscious early sensory memories from the past, for example loud voices, sudden loud noises, movement in the visual field and even temperature.
	5. <b>Explain things clearly</b>	<i>And he based the stuff we were learning about on real life topics, and that's always amazing to do.  When we got the new teacher it was so much better, because she came round each table and talked to us and went through what we needed to do.</i>	Sometimes because of past events in the child’s life, there may be gaps in knowledge or even times when they zone out. Please explain clearly and check they understand in a kind way.

	6. Check that I understand	<i>I appreciate when they give hints but don't give the answers to the students.</i>	If the child is struggling, they may get very frustrated and feel as though they can't do anything right. This affects their self-worth, confidence and capacity to take in information and problem solve. Please help them by not giving the answer but by giving hints and help.
	7. Interaction with my peers is an important part of my learning	<i>I feel like I work better with other people. Because sometimes if you're working by yourself you get stuck on what to do, where if there's two or three of you, they'll have ideas as well.</i>	If the child has been rejected in the past they may find it hard to build relationships as they may not know how, or they may feel as though nobody likes them. They may misread situations. It is important that they are given opportunities to develop these skills and friendships in class. By working with others they can share their knowledge and skills, thus increasing their confidence, as well as asking questions and learning from others.
	8. Enable me to develop greater independence with my learning	<i>Sometimes Ms XXXX does see three before me, so you'd have to see three students or try and figure it out yourself before you ask her.  In the back of my book sometimes I write down new words that we've learnt or new types of methods – like in maths or something; and then the definitions or what to do.  I was typing it up on my iPad because I'm a digital leader, which is...we've got a lot of IT, as you could see, and me and all the digital leaders are IT support. So we help everybody who need help on the technology if they don't know how to do something.</i>	Structures such as “3 before me” helps the child to see that the teacher is being fair and treating them the same as everyone else - the teacher isn't rejecting them. This also helps them to trust their peers by asking them, as well as developing the child's independence. He/she will need to feel confident about asking for help and finding things out for themselves. If the child can find things out for themselves, or if they can have some responsibility then their feelings of self-worth and confidence will develop more quickly. This is important as it is an area where they might be behind their peers who have had more stability in their lives.
	9. Will I be able to access and complete the homework?	<i>Homework does help and revision lessons.  Coming to the end of the year homework would become a problem because when we were sitting our English exam, our history teacher, she would give us homework and be like, it's got to be in for tomorrow... Which we'd do, but we'd really struggle.</i>	Please be aware of the home life - there may not be access to IT (not the child's fault). They may have been encouraged by their social worker to attend Cadets or another club. So please give them time, support and the resources to complete homework tasks.
AFTER a lesson	10. Consider any education /opportunities and make contact with my carer(s).	<i>Try and do extra work when I am at home to stretch my knowledge a little bit like.</i>	Please bear the child in mind for extra activities / opportunities etc. Do not assume they wouldn't be interested or that they wouldn't be able to afford it. Post/email information to carers (check you have up to date contacts) and maybe keep the social worker informed too.