

Back to School: September 2020

A briefing for Designated Teachers, Designated Safeguarding Leads & attendance leads

What to expect from the Virtual School teams:
ESLAC, Education Welfare, EOTAS Health Needs, Schools' Safeguarding

As far as possible, we are aiming for *business as usual*, working safely with you and our children in ways that are covid-secure

Virtual School Virtual Training Programme 2020-21

A full virtual training programme for DTs and DSLs is available now for booking using the google form at this link:

[Virtual School Training Programme 2020-21](#)

EDUCATION WELFARE

As you know, attendance at school from 1st September 2020 will once again be compulsory, with arrangements clearly set out in the government's statutory guidance [School Attendance \(August 2020\)](#), updated to respond to the current global pandemic.

The Education Welfare team will be returning to 'business as usual' from September, in line with the return to usual rules on attendance. We will be available to offer advice and support on fulfilling statutory duties in relation to:

- school attendance
- children in employment & entertainment and chaperones
- monitoring and safeguarding pupils who are electively home educated (EHE)
- managing the process for children missing from education (CME)

Education Welfare Officers will:

- make weekly contact with DSLs
- hold regular attendance meetings either face to face or virtually
- make home visits
- convene meetings with parents
- support the reintegration of EHE students back into school

- offer advice and support for re-engaging students in school
- work with other agencies to support pupils with concerns regarding the return to school
- monitor and support the attendance of permanently excluded pupils in alternative provision.

Although we don't yet know how parents across the county will respond to mandatory school attendance, we do know that it is more important than ever to identify and monitor children at risk of missing education. The first **monthly CME Return** is due on 30th September, and I am encouraging all education providers to make sure that it is completed and submitted to

cmemonthlyreturn@northumberland.gov.uk

according to Northumberland's guidance [Children missing and missing out on education \(CME\)](#). Each child that meets the criteria needs to be reported every month. The forms should be checked by the school's DSL prior to submission. Your Education Welfare Officer will provide you with the support you need to complete the form accurately and on time.

We know that there is an increased level of risk of exploitation for children who are excluded from school. I am also therefore reminding you that all permanent and fixed term exclusions should be recorded in your management information system on the day which they occur so that the local authority has access to accurate and live information which contributes to the safeguarding of individual children.

During the summer holidays we have had several enquiries from parents who are considering elective home education for their children. You may need up to date information to have discussions with parents which you can find in Northumberland's [Elective Home Education Guidance for Parents and Professionals \(July 2020\)](#).



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Information has been sent to all DSLs regarding our multi-agency process for monitoring the welfare of children who are EHE. EWO's will be working closely with DSLs to ensure that any decisions about EHE are made in the best interests of the children concerned and that appropriate safeguards are in place.

For further information and support regarding school attendance, CME and EHE, please contact our Principal Education Welfare Officer, Sarah Wintringham: T 01670 623392/E

sarah.wintringham@northumberland.gov.uk

ESLAC

PEP update: For the new term it is vital that the outcomes in every child's PEP are up to date and capture what needs to be done to get back on track with their learning. PP+ will once again be allocated according to our PP+ policy on a termly basis, dependent on the termly review of outcomes and 6 monthly PEP review meetings taking place within timescales.

There have been many updates to the electronic PEP system during the summer including a PEP scheduler which means that Designated Teachers will now receive reminders when 6 monthly PEP review meetings are due.

Emotional wellbeing: a range of extremely useful resources have been made available to schools to support emotional and mental health and wellbeing on the return to school. You can find those resources here:

[COVID 19 - Materials to Support Children and Young People](#)

[COVID 19- Resources to support the return to school](#)

In addition, for looked after children, there will be an ESLAC Educational Psychologist available at a drop-in for 15 a minute problem solving consultation to discuss any issues that you might want to explore about individual pupils. The drop-ins will take place every Thursday, 11am-12pm until the October half term. To book a 15 min slot please email our lead EP Carol Booth –

carol.booth@northumberland.gov.uk with a brief outline of your concern and she

will allocate you a time slot at a drop in. Please note this is not a referral service.

The Virtual School training programme now includes virtual training sessions on attachment, trauma and bereavement.

For any queries about education support for looked after children please contact the Deputy Virtual School Headteacher, Tara Prescott T 01670 629275 E tara.prescott@northumberland.gov.uk

EOTAS Health Needs

The EOTAS health needs team is currently accepting referrals for the academic year 2020 - 2021. Any new referral must be submitted on the **EOTAS health needs passport** which can be found in the Referral section of the [Virtual School webpage](#). The referral should be accompanied by the supporting medical letter from CYPS or a consultant. Please remember we do not accept referrals from GPs or Primary Mental health. The referral will not be considered at the weekly triage until we have both documents.

If the young person you referred has not been in school during the period of lockdown, we hope you have been able to keep in touch with the family to keep them informed about what is happening and that the referral includes any relevant information you have gained while the young person was working at home.

Until October half term we expect all teaching to be remote and we will keep schools informed of the return to face to face teaching once we have suitable venues, appropriately risk assessed in line with national and local guidance.

Contact details for each school partnership have been updated as follows:

Contact for:

- Berwick Academy
- Special Schools

Angie Mitchison

angela.mitchison@northumberland.gov.uk

7789927033

Contact for:

- James Calvert Spence College



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Julie Howard
julie.howard2@northumberland.gov.uk
7855282974

Contact for:

- Bede Academy
- Duchess Community HS

Annabel Saunders
annabel.saunders@northumberland.gov.uk
07973785113

Contact for:

- NCEA
- Ashington Academy
- Bedlington Academy
- St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy

Cathryn Arnold
cathryn.arnold@northumberland.gov.uk
07855123650

Contact for:

- Ponteland High School
- Prudhoe Community High School
- Cramlington Learning Village
- The King Edward VI School

Sarah DeGroot
sarah.de-groot@northumberland.gov.uk
7814094612

Contact for:

- Haydon Bridge High School
- Queen Elizabeth High School
- Blyth Academy
- Astley Community High School

Victoria Pugh
[victoria.pugh01@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto: victoria.pugh01@northumberland.gov.uk)
07970 340652

SCHOOLS' SAFEGUARDING

The team is available to support schools with any safeguarding queries, offer advice about referrals or any other aspects of schools' statutory duties set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Safe to Learn will return to half termly editions and it is important these are shared with all staff and governors. Termly Briefings for DSLs will restart this term and we hope you can join us to receive an update on local priorities and procedures.

A team member works with our colleagues in social care and each day reviews the Child Concern Notifications which are received. We may find it necessary to call school for additional information or to advise you of any agreed actions. Please ensure your office staff know that if they receive a call from one of us it is important that your DSL is informed immediately.

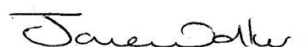
We will continue to deliver training to DSLs and also offer training for your staff and governors, either generic safeguarding training or on a theme of your choice. If we deliver your whole staff training we will offer you a training audit for your staff, helping you to evidence that they have a sound understanding of safeguarding appropriate for their role and also identifying any gaps in knowledge. We can also deliver Safer Recruitment training to schools or partnerships. You can book on any of our current training packages by using the link at the top of this briefing.

Our competitive SLA offers a flexible package of support and we are happy to discuss this with the Headteacher or DSL.

Contact us by email or telephone:

- Carol Leckie 07584313178
Carol.Leckie@northumberland.gov.uk
- Justine Clephane 07879 874168
Justine.Clephane@northumberland.gov.uk
- Victoria Kinneavy 07966 325300
Victoria.Kinneavy@northumberland.gov.uk

Wishing you all a smooth and safe return to school. I look forward to working with you all this year.



Jane Walker
Virtual School Headteacher



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