

Durham Virtual School for Children in Care

Supporting
Children in Care and
Children Previously in Care

Governor Training
Roles and Responsibilities of the
Local Authority and Schools

Melanie Stubbs – Virtual School Head



Purpose of the training:

To understand who children in care and those children previously in care are.

To consider issues impacting upon the education of these children.

Develop an understanding of:

- The roles and responsibilities of the Local Authority, schools and school governors
- The support processes in place for children in care in County Durham

To clarify additional funding available for children in care after and previously in care.

Key Document:

[The Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children
Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities](#)

[Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

(DfE February 2018)



Durham Virtual School

Education

Virtual School Head

Melanie Stubbs

Deputy Virtual School Head

Sarah Blenkinsopp

Front Door Manager

Karen Jeffery

Virtual School CIC PEP Caseworkers

Alison Heal

Laura Tate

Jane Hillier

Lynne Lunn/ Cheryl Wall

Andrew Brass

Sarah Rycroft

Sarah Roe

Pippa Kelly

Inclusion Support

Annette Dodds

Plus additional TA

From September 2021

Changed Structure

Refocus of roles

Every Durham CIC with an

EHCP is also allocated a

SEND Caseworker.

Introduced a Durham

Children in Care Policy.

Updated August 2024

EYFS – Fiona Callaghan

Post 16 - Carol Gallagher

Julie Langton

CPIC Officer – Jade Clarke



Virtual School:

Collectively brings together all children in care for whom an authority has responsibility and closely monitors their progress.

It does not replace the school or education provision for children in care.

The Virtual School Head

A strategic role that:

- Aims to **raise the educational attainment** of children in care
- **Champions the educational needs** of children in care
- Ensures all children in care have a high-quality **Personal Education Plan**
- Brings together and **analyses data** on children in care.
- **Works with schools** and education providers to develop appropriate support and ensure access to full-time education
- **Remove barriers** that are hindering outcomes for children in care.
- Works with / **trains** designated teachers and governors, parents/carers and Social Workers
- Work with Virtual Head Teachers on a **regional** basis to resolve issues between schools and other local authorities.
- Introduced the focus on **CIN and CP** in September 21. **The Extended Role of the Virtual Head**



Durham Virtual School – Caseworker Role

Children in Care PEP Caseworker

First point of contact

- Responsible for a caseload of children and young people in care and identified as a Durham child
- Reception to Yr11
- Will attend all initial PEPs for children entering care
- Attend 2 out of 3 PEPs during the year, unless the child has complex issues then attend all three PEPs
- Ensure quality of PEP document
- Identify children/young people at risk of underachieving
- Guide schools and carers on options of support for a child
- Monitor impact of Pupil Premium Plus funding for Durham children in care

Virtual School Front Door Manager

- Provide consistent point of contact
- Respond to emergency situations for schools/carers/social workers
- Seek solutions to initial concerns/queries
- Sign-post to appropriate Local Authority Officer including VS Caseworker
- Support transition if a change of school is essential
- Provide supervision for CIC PEP Caseworkers
- Monitor the VS website
- Research up to date training and information to keep the VS at the forefront of change and development.
- Support PEP meetings if the allocated Caseworker is unavailable.
- Lead on UASC



Support provided by the Virtual School

- Allocation of a Caseworker for every Durham child in care.
- Monitoring education of each child in care.
 - Progress and attainment
 - Quality and impact of PEP
 - Academic attainment
 - Agree and monitor impact on outcomes of Pupil Premium
- Access to therapeutic support:
 - Senior EP
 - Full Circle Help Line and training – CIC Only can be discussed
 - School Counsellor Support
 - Occupational Therapist intervention – Future Steps
 - Support through the EWEL team.
- Access to Virtual School off-site inclusion Base (Y7 to 11 only)
- Reading resources for all Primary aged and Year 7 children Inc. access to Fiction Express
- Anspear Learning App
- 1:1, small group support and off-site provision
- Training of other professionals



Responsibilities of the LA

- Appoint a Virtual School Head to champion the needs children in care.
- Ensure schools appoint a Designated Governor and Designated Teacher to act as a resource and advocate for children in care in their school
- Ensure each child in care has a high-quality Personal Education Plan
- Ensure education provision has been arranged before the child/young person's care placement unless it is an emergency or on clear health and safety grounds
- The education placement for a child in care should be full time in a local mainstream school, unless the circumstances of the child make this unsuitable
- Children in care and those previously looked after are given top priority for admission to their chosen school at the start of primary and secondary schooling and for in year transfers
- Care leavers are supported by the local authority until they are 21 (24 if in Higher Education)



Role of the school

Head Teacher/Chair of Governors/**Designated Governor** for CIC

- **Be aware of all children in care in the school**
 - Who are they?
 - How well are they doing?
 - What support is required?
 - Is support in place?
- Appoint a **Designated Teacher for CIC** and a **Designated Teacher for CPIC** to lead on their support in school. This is often the same person.
- Ensure the Designated Teacher has the **time and resources** to meet the demands of the role
- Ensure CIC/CPIC are prioritised for school places
- Ensure all staff in the school are trained in the needs of children in care.
- Provide an annual report on how well children in care are doing in the school
- Work with the Virtual School Head to:
 - Ensure efficient use of Pupil Premium Plus
 - Identify how to address areas of underachievement
 - Improve the progress and attainment of each child in care. Maintain school stability by reducing the risk of suspension.

Confidentiality to be considered
What do you need to know/not know

Can be the same person

School admissions policy

Confidentiality
to be
considered



Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

- Champion for CIC and CPIC in school.
- Have high expectations for children in care and previously in care
- Central point of contact – Parents, Carers, Social Workers, School Staff
- **A leadership role within schools**
- **Qualified teacher who has completed their induction period and is working as a teacher**
- **Can be the Head Teacher**
- Facilitate/support the PEP process for children in care.
- Report annually to Governors on the needs, challenges, progress and attainment of children in care and previously in care
- Ensure staff in school:
 - Have high expectations
 - Understand the need for stability for children in care and previously in care
 - Consider the impact of trauma and attachment and what this means for the teaching of individual children
 - Understand their role in the Personal Education Plan



Pupil Premium

Children in Care

DfE guidance:

- £2,570 per child
- Managed by the VSH
- **To impact on progress and attainment**
- Agreed by the VSH and school
- NOT A PERSONAL ALLOWANCE for a child
- Can be used across the cohort group of CIC/CPIC

To Schools:

- £1,700 directly to schools
- Central funding used to provide:
 - Increased EP support
 - Increased School Counsellor support
 - Individualised 1:1 or small group support
- Impacting on reading (OFSTED Focus)
- Targeted resources for identified children
- Off-site support
- Access to specialist provision

Pupil Premium

Children previously in care

DfE guidance:

- £2,570 per child
- **To impact on progress and attainment**
- NOT A PERSONAL ALLOWANCE for a child
- Can be used across the cohort group of CIC/CPIC
- They do not have access to the additional interventions available for CIC through the top sliced PP+

To Schools:

- £2,570 directly to schools in April Budget - **Schools October Census**
- Can be included on the CIC PP+ Annual resource plan
- Good practice to include adoptive parents and guardians in decisions AdoptionUK and PAC-UK proactive in promoting funding



Identifying Children Previously in Care

Parent/Guardian should present the School with a copy of the Adoption, Special Guardianship, Residence or Child Arrangement Order or a letter from the local Authority which made the Order. In the event that none of these are available, eligibility can also be discussed with the Virtual School.

Data on CPIC status is not automatically transferred in a CTF from a previous School and the new School should see a copy of the relevant Order to prove eligibility.

Designated Teachers may use parent emails, contact update letters, School newsletters and websites to raise awareness of Post CIC Pupil Premium and check eligibility. **IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE FUNDING, THE CHILD MUST BE IDENTIFIED AS CPIC OR SGO ON YOUR OCTOBER CENSUS**

Where a child is moving to a new School, ask the Parent/Guardian if you can share their status with the new School. Ask them to provide evidence of CPIC status to their new School as soon as they start. This stops children being 'lost'.

There is no requirement for CPIC to have a PEP.



In our support of Children in Care it is important to consider:

- What would it feel like if I were a child in care?
- What would I want from my Head Teacher, Designated Governor and Designated Teacher?
- What would I want to make me feel secure and enjoy learning?
- Do I want it to be known that I am in care?
- Who needs to know in school that I am in care?
- The impact of being suspended from school
 - Reinforces my instability
 - Puts pressure on my care placement
 - Places me at increased risk of sexual/criminal exploitation
 - Impacts on my opportunity to progress and achieve
- Consider the requests of the child who is in care and how information is shared



Key Questions for a Designated Governor:

Your school:

- Who is the Designated Teacher in your school?
- Who are the children in care in your school?(must not be known by name).
- Are school staff, who need to know, aware of the children in care?
- Which local authorities are responsible for the children in care?
- Has each child in care got a PEP in place?
- How well are the children in care doing in your school?
- How much Pupil Premium Plus is accessed for each child in care?
- Is Pupil Premium Plus used as a cohort spend?
- How is the Pupil Premium Plus used for each child in care?
- Does the school behaviour Policy take into consideration the needs of children in care?
- Has school adopted the CIC Policy for County Durham Schools?

For each child in care:

- What is their attendance?
- Are they making expected/good progress?
- What is impacting upon their progress and attainment?
- How can their needs be best supported?
- Are there any behaviour related issues and does the schools behaviour policy take into consideration Attachment and Trauma?
- Is the child at risk of a suspension or permanent exclusion?
- How flexible is your school in meeting needs for CIC?

Reporting:

- Has an annual report on the progress and achievement of children in care been completed?
- (This may be part of the Head Teachers annual report – Individual children **MUST NOT** be identifiable)
- What are the outcomes for children in care at the end of the year?
- Has Pupil Premium Plus been used appropriately?
- How have children in care been supported to close the gaps?



Additional Governor Questions:

Training

- How do you ensure you are up to date with your knowledge and statutory expectations?
- What training have you done in the last 2 years?
- Have you attended the networks for DTs?
- How do you share new info / strategies with staff / what training or briefings have you delivered?

Time and Resources

- What is your time allocation to be able to carry out this role? Are you given any protected time. Is it flexible at key points of the year eg around PEPs?
- Do you have support for the role?
- What other resources are allocated to you?
- Are you able to influence policy and action?
- How does your HT / SLT support your role?

• Other useful questions:

- How are staff informed about CIC/CPIC and how do they find out about :
 - The name of the Designated Teacher and who else performs elements of this role?
 - The children in their class (if any) who are CIC/CPIC
 - Personalised strategies to use in class and around school.
- How does the designated teacher contribute to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting CIC/CPIC to achieve?
- How does the school support a child who joins the school mid-year to quickly feel at home?
- How does the DT manage the Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings? [The DT or their trained delegate should chair all PEP meetings, gathering the information ready for the meeting, talking to the child to obtain his/her views, and following up of the PEP action plan after the meeting]
- Are there any school related issues/policies that prevent from achieving?
- What are the arrangements in place that have contributed to successful provision for CIC/CPIC making good or better than expected progress?
- How are additional resources that come into the school for CIC/CPIC used to raise achievement? ie Pupil Premium Plus funding up to £2570 per CIC/CPIC. How does the school collect qualifying status information about CPIC?



Any Questions?

Melanie Stubbs

Virtual School Head

melanie.stubbs@durham.gov.uk

03000 265848 07825 118837

Sarah Blenkinsopp

Deputy Virtual School Head

sarah.blenkinsopp@durham.gov.uk

03000 262818 07766 785221

PCIC

Previous Children in Care Officer

jade.clarke@durham.gov.uk

