



Oxfordshire

Virtual School for Looked After Children and Care Leavers, 0-25

The PEP Toolkit

***High Quality Personal Education Planning (PEP)
Guidance for Schools, Settings and Social Workers***

The Oxfordshire Virtual School website

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool

Here you will find Oxfordshire VS training , PEP documentation and model PEPs, further advice and information and contact details.

What is a PEP?

- The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is a **statutory** document for looked after children.
- The PEP is an **evolving record** of what needs to happen for looked after children to enable them to make accelerated **progress** and fulfil their **potential**. They document the education journey for a looked after child.
- The PEP should act as a mechanism to hold all stakeholders to account for the aspirational educational outcomes of looked after children through targeted planning.
- The PEP ensures that the key people in relation to the education of a looked after child meet, discuss, plan and review :
 - Achievements, progress and strengths
 - Needs and barriers to learning
 - Appropriate and aspirational outcomes
 - Provision and interventions to meet the outcomes
 - Additional funding that may be needed through Pupil Premium Plus (if eligible)

PEP Responsibilities

Partnership between the social worker, the foster carer and the designated teacher is crucial to the pupil thriving and achieving. The PEP is the joint responsibility of the Local Authority and the school. They are the Corporate Parents.

- **The Social Worker** is responsible for the Care Plan, made before the pupil comes into care; the PEP is legally an integral part of this plan. The social worker needs to ensure that the designated teacher is informed in advance of other meetings about the pupil, particularly LAC Reviews/Pathway Plan which are led by the **Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)** however the school should not be expected to attend all these meetings! In the case of a student in year 12 or 13, the social worker may be a leaving care personal advisor. The school is not expected to attend the LAC review.
- The social worker convenes the PEP within 10 days of a child entering care, or moving to a new school.
- If for any reason the pupil is not in educational provision, the social worker should still call a PEP meeting. A member of the Virtual School staff will take the role of the DT.
- **The Designated Teacher (DT)** has a statutory role and leads on how the PEP is used to monitor and support the pupil's progress towards education targets. They should see the PEP as a useful and living document and be familiar with the statutory guidance on their role. See [Designated Teacher for Looked After Children](#)
- The DT, particularly if they are part of the Senior Leadership team, will be the most effective person to lead the PEP process and have an overview of pupil premium spending. In an early years setting this may be a designated person.
- The DT should convene and chair all PEP meetings after the first.
- If the DT delegates the PEP process, the PEP meeting should be attended and written up by a qualified educational professional reporting to the DT. It should be **quality assured and approved by the DT**.

- The person leading the PEP should have DT training with the Virtual School.
- All PEPs are also statutorily required to be **quality assured by a senior member of the VirtualSchool**. [Criteria and Guidance for Quality Assurance of PEPS](#)
- The DT is required to report at least once a year to the **Governing Body (Voluntary Committee)** on the progress of children in care. This includes reporting on their own training, any planning or process issues arising from the PEP and on the impact of the pupil premium on the student's progress. Report templates, see [Governors](#)
- Schools and settings have a responsibility to ensure that they pass on information to each other when students move; it is an expectation that by the PEP meeting, the school will be in possession of the pupil's file.
- DTs should endeavour to ensure that those responsible for the co-ordination of Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) can provide reports to, or attend the meetings of those in year 7 upwards.

“Teachers have the power to impact upon children’s lives and change their destiny forever. A teacher is an influencer, a mentor, an inspiration, a role model and a caring adult who can look into children’s eyes and speak words that can change their lives forever.”

Betsy De Thierry, 2015

START HERE: Child arrives in care or in a new school/setting. Social worker to liaise with school and the Virtual School in order to arrange the first PEP meeting within 20 school days. The Virtual School will ensure an ePEP is set up.



First PEP Meeting
Log on to the ePEP before the meeting (see PEP meeting guidance)

Convened by: Social Worker

Attended by:

- Designated Teacher
- Carer
- Child
- Key Worker
- Parent

Led by: Senior School Staff / Designated Teacher



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Subsequent PEP Meetings

Convened by: Designated Teacher

Attended by:

- Social worker
- Carer
- Child
- Key Worker
- Parent

Led by: Senior School Staff / Designated Teacher

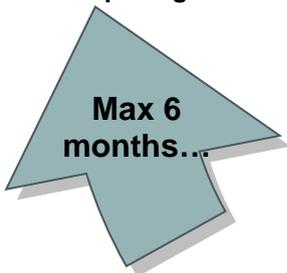
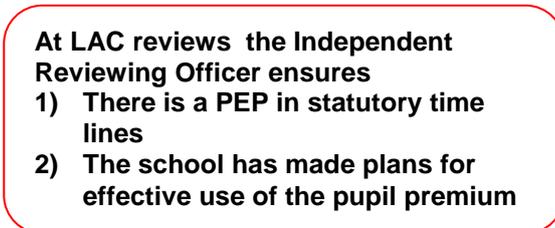
The social worker should **update** the social care section of the ePEP before the meeting.

School has responsibility for updating and completing the ePEP



ePEP signed off by DT and SW

When signed off by Virtual School, PEP documents should be sent to carers, and parents if appropriate



ePEP signed off by DT and SW

When signed off by Virtual School, PEP documents should be sent to carers, and parents if appropriate



2nd PEP Meeting

Convened by: Designated Teacher

Attended by:

- Social worker
- Carer
- Child
- Key Worker
- Parent

Led by: Senior School Staff / Designated Teacher

The social worker should **update** the social care section of the ePEP before the meeting.

School has responsibility for updating and completing the ePEP

The PEP Meeting

Guidance

PEP preparation checklist:

1. Everyone has confirmed attendance
2. Pupil voice collected, DT and pupil have had discussion about the meeting e.g. who will be there, possible outcomes
3. Attendance, progress and attainment data is to hand and has been completed on the ePEP. Round Robin template on website can be used to collect teacher information.
4. **Other key documents** e.g. recent reports, inclusion support plans, SEN documentation, provision mapping/individual tracking documents are available as needed
5. SEN and other relevant documentation should be attached to the ePEP.

The meeting

Welcome and introductions

Decide who will chair (the DT), take notes and agree the timescale for the length of the meeting. Complete an attendance sheet with contact details if necessary.



Educational achievements and aspirations

Start with the pupil voice and carer voice – What is going well? What are the challenges? What are the needs and aspirations of the pupil and carers and/or parents? School view – what is going well? Where is support offered and/or needed?



Outcomes and actions

Agree outcomes based on the previous conversation. Outcomes should be **specific to the pupil** and expressed from a personal perspective, not a service one. They should support **high aspirations** and set **high expectations** and build on what is working well and address what is not working well. Make outcomes SMART with a clear purpose.

Identify actions that will support the achievement of the outcomes (interventions, provision etc)



Next meeting – set the date and time

Think about the best time for the meeting – don't pull pupils out of lessons unless absolutely necessary a talk to them about how best to secure their input. Attendance at the meeting is a decision that should be made by those people who best know them and their wishes. There is no 'must' and it should be 'as appropriate.'

The PEP should record **actions and responsibilities**. The PEP process is a **cycle of consultation, planning and review** designed to ensure that the corporate parent is collectively working to ensure that the pupil can maximise their potential. The process should:

- Be informed by the best information available
- Contribute to stability for the pupil
- Signal additional and/or special needs
- Establish short term clear goals and prepare for the next stage of learning and provision
- Record progress and achievement
- Ensure access to services and support
- Make best value use of resources such as the pupil premium and demonstrate the impact on progress

Pupil Voice

- A key feature of the PEP process is the participation of the pupil. Their voice should be at the centre of the discussion and The Virtual School provides documents for a range of ages to record this. Where the student is unwilling to join the meeting, the record of this prior discussion should be presented.
- EYFS Voice of the Child can be sent in any format and may include the child's verbal view, pictures, or any form which the early years setting uses to show the feelings of the child.
- Pupil voice resources, [see website, Pupil's Voice](#)

How to write good outcomes

- Outcomes should be **specific to the pupil** and expressed from a personal perspective, not a service one.
- Outcomes are not provision – provision is what must be provided to meet a pupil's needs and enable outcomes to be achieved
- Outcomes should support **high aspirations** and set **high expectations**. They should build on what is working well and address what is not working well.
- Make outcomes SMART with a clear purpose

Examples of model PEPs are on the website: [The Virtual School for Looked After Children](#)

Effective interventions and Additional Provision

The Virtual School ensure they keep up to date with current research and practice on the most effective interventions to close the gap. They call on national and local research to inform advice to schools, as well as discussions with the pupils and young people themselves.

The Virtual School can advise schools on a range of additional provision that they can purchase to support the outcomes of looked after children.

Measuring the impact of the pupil premium

The impact of all interventions needs to be evaluated. The focus should be on accelerated progress/closing the gap rather than maintaining current progress. Examples of individual provision trackers can be found on the [OXSIT Website - Resources](#) (Login required)

Outcomes and actions

Outcome:	For C to feel she has an appropriate space to express her emotions and feel safe to do so appropriately within the school environment
Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Mentor support 1x weekly • Protective Behaviour group sessions x 4 • Key person daily check in
Evaluation:	C's SDQ score's at school/home will be reflective of each other, illustrating she is expressing emotions appropriately in both settings. By the next PEP C will be able to identify her 'helping hand' of key adults who she can access

Outcome:	D will be able to demonstrate a greater confidence in completing Maths independently
Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group maths intervention – 3 x a week • Foster carer to be taught calculation methods used by school to reinforce at home • Foster carer to ensure D does My Maths at home 2 x a week
Evaluation:	D to move up 3 points on maths continuum by the next PEP

Outcome:	L achieve qualifications she needs for the college course she has chosen
Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group cognition training with DT to include revision techniques • Key worker to meet twice a week to review revision timetable • Key worker to communicate with foster carer once a fortnight re revision tips • 1:1 maths tuition once a week
Evaluation:	5 A* - G at GCSE and successful transfer to college

Outcome:	R to make a successful transfer to secondary school
Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group additional visit to new school • DT and SENCO from sending and receiving schools to meet and discuss needs and adjustments needed • Small group resilience group working on transfer issues including making a photo book • Key worker identified and transition work completed
Evaluation:	R attendance and engagement at secondary school. R reports that he is happy and confident.

Outcome:	P to be able read fluently, texts at his level, in a range of contexts
Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFT reading intervention 4 x a week for 20 minutes during tutor time • Teachers to ensure that in ALL lessons P is given texts that he can access and therefore work independently. DT and SENCO to support teachers to ensure equity of access • P to read out loud for 10 minutes every day to foster carer
Evaluation:	Current reading age 7.8 years, chronological age 14 yrs. By next PEP P would have made at least double the rate of progress.

Supporting good attendance

- Once a pupil (over 5 years of age) enters care the school receive a **daily telephone call** from **Welfare Call** to check on attendance and reasons for absence. Any absence should be checked by the school daily and the DT should inform the social worker immediately of any safeguarding concerns.
- Attendance must be accurately recorded on the PEP and if the pupil is at risk of persistent absence a PEP should be urgently convened.
- If there has been a recent fixed term exclusion the reasons and subsequent actions must be discussed and recorded in detail. Exclusion of a looked after child is regarded as a serious matter. [exclusions protocol](#). Holidays during term time must be agreed by the Virtual School Head and Corporate Parenting Manager. See [Policies and Procedures](#)

Supporting good behaviour

Disruptive behaviour can be an indication of unmet needs. The virtual school should be contacted at the earliest signs of behaviour difficulties in order that they can work with the school on early intervention solutions. The Virtual school has links with specialist providers and can direct schools to support. Schools should try to identify whether there are causal factors and intervene early in order to reduce the need for a subsequent exclusion.

- Where behaviour is causing greater concern, a quickly convened PEP meeting is an appropriate forum for a multi-agency assessment discussion. The meeting should involve the Virtual School and should be informed by reports from relevant professionals such as Educational Psychologist, CAMHs consultant, or school SENCo.
- The PEP should give high priority to strategies to support good behaviour for learning.

Child in care with challenging behaviour

What is their behaviour communicating?
Ensure you try to understand the behaviour in order to plan intervention and support

Discuss with carers and social workers to establish any underlying reasons - changes in circumstances at home, key dates/events? Ensure contact with carers is maintained for good communication (positive and negative)

Are they accessing the curriculum - SEN assessments, observation of engagement/appropriateness of curriculum? Ensure adjustments and interventions are put in place and reviewed /evaluated regularly

Plan support for CYP in school - bespoke package of learning and social/emotional support
Ensure needs of CYP and plan are shared with all staff

What VSLAC can offer/support:

SEN assessments - are there any underlying learning or emotional needs ?

Inclusion Support Plan - bespoke plan to support CYP in school

Cross-professionals meeting to plan intervention/support

Signposting to other agencies
Advice on alternative provision
PP+ as funding support

Being aspirational

Future planning must form part of the PEP. It should aim to support the pupil or young person, and those supporting them, to aspire and plan for their future and, crucially, to understand the link between their current choices, curriculum and activities and achieving these aspirations. It is essential that the PEP makes explicit these links in order to promote motivation and aspiration.

Change of school

- Should the social worker plan any care placement change that will mean a change of school or significantly affect the current provision, a professional meeting must be called and a school change form completed.
- Where assessment, monitoring and support by the school suggest that a pupil is not in the right provision for their needs, this should also trigger a PEP meeting to explore options and plan next steps.
- Any change of school requires completion of an approval form to be approved by the Virtual School Head and the Corporate Parenting Manager. See the website for protocols and transition documentation.

Oxfordshire children placed out of county

- Different LAs have different PEP proforma and slightly different protocols for implementing statutory guidance and funding.
- For **schools in Oxfordshire** where pupils of other corporate parents are placed, the Oxfordshire Virtual School can provide advice and help to signpost appropriate professionals in and out of county. Other Virtual Schools are encouraged to contact us for support and advice.
- For **schools out of Oxfordshire** where our own corporate pupils are educated, the Virtual School is available at all times for discussion about PEPs and other matters. We aim to have a senior member of our team at most first PEPs in a school out of county.
- We are part of a national network of Virtual Schools and expect to work closely with the LAs who educate our pupils. If an out of Oxfordshire school wishes to use their own LA's protocols, procedures and documents, this is entirely acceptable.

Unaccompanied asylum seekers

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) have very specific needs. Planning their provision effectively may require the presence of interpreters and an understanding of their immigration status. Talking about this with young people can be difficult for both the young person and for those working with them, but it is essential that their future planning is discussed within this context although DTs follow this protocol: [UASC protocol](#)