

## Summer Term 2022 Newsletter for Designated Teachers

[The Virtual School for children in care | Suffolk County Council](#)

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#### 1. Introduction



**Welcome to this term's newsletter for Designated Teachers, from the Suffolk Virtual School.**

Our sincere thanks again for your incredible hard work for our children in care. We know that the spring term was a particularly challenging one and we really appreciate the time, effort and care that has been invested in completing the pupils' Personal Education Plans (PEPs) to ensure that they reflect each pupil's provision, progress and lived experience of school.

Thank you to everyone who has already completed and uploaded a school based SDQ; if you have not already done so, our ask would be that you do this for the summer term; please see the Documents section of the ePEP for the blank template and scoring guide. You can also access the questionnaire and more information about the SDQ via the Mentally Healthy Schools Youth in Mind website:

[The strengths and difficulties questionnaire \(SDQ\): Mentally Healthy Schools](#)

## 2. Pupil Voice

One of the highlights of reading the PEPs is hearing the pupils' voices and seeing their achievements. This included a photo of a child having just enjoyed a piece of the "chocolateiest cake he could find". Please see a selection of pupil voice quotes below:

*"I enjoy school and particularly likes my class teacher. I feel confident that I can approach and share worries and problems I may have. I have found that the unstructured periods of the school day have been the most problematic in terms of social difficulties."*

*"I am really happy in my new school. I feel happy and safe here and I really enjoy everything that we do. I can't think of anything that I don't enjoy but sometimes I find things a bit tricky. Everyone in my class helps me to learn. The adults give me help when I need it and my friends on my table also help me too. At home [my carer] helps me with the words and listens to me read. I like lots of children in my class and my particular friend is [XX], she is good to me. My friends on my table help me."*

*"I'm happy to do my 1:1 sessions, but I find it socially awkward, I'd prefer it if it were in a small group. I find this better and it suits my learning style. I find all the changes hard. I want the adults in my life to treat me like a grown up. This means in and outside of school. I've had to do a lot for myself - I want to be making my own choices."*

### 3. The Personal Education Plan (ePEP): Evaluation Feedback



#### PEP compliance and quality assurance

Those of you familiar with the Suffolk ePEP process will know that our model is for the ePEP to be started at the beginning of each term, updated regularly throughout the term, and then submitted two weeks before the end of each term, so that each term's ePEP captures the pupil's provision, progress and lived experience of school, across the whole term.

We can view the ePEP 'live' at any point in the term, and then once you submit the ePEP, we go through a process of quality assuring each and every PEP as part of our statutory role for monitoring and promoting the educational achievement of our children in care; you then receive an automated message from Welfare Call confirming this, but we also wanted to remind you that we provide feedback on each PEP; this feedback is available in the uploaded PEP document.

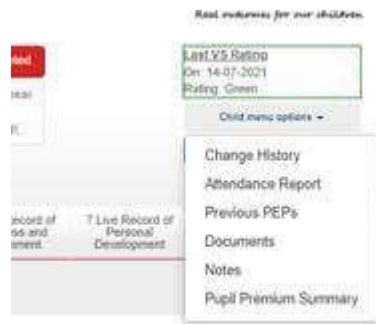
#### Evaluation Feedback

The moderator writes a comment about the quality of the ePEP as part of the moderation process. The comment highlights the strengths of the ePEP but also provides recommendations about how it can be more effective, where appropriate. The comment can be found in the Evaluation page of the ePEP, which can be accessed once the document has been moderated.

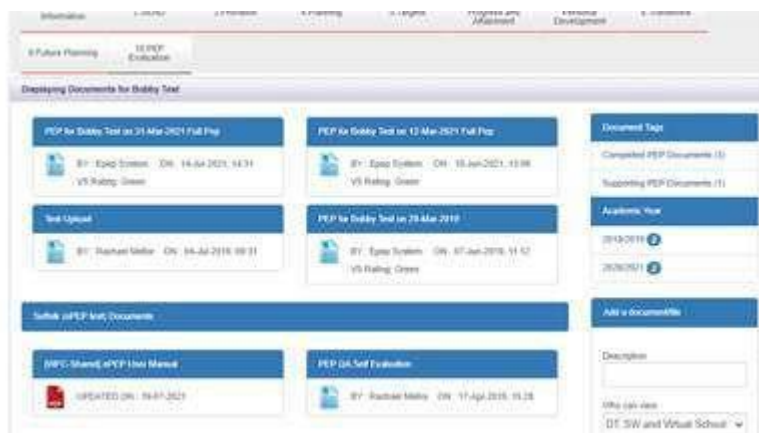


## To access the feedback:

Go into the child's ePEP – click on the top blue lozenge 'Child Menu Options' and select Documents.



The newly moderated ePEP will be stored in the Documents section as a Word document.



Click on the document's icon to open it. Scroll down to the end of the Document where you will find the Evaluation page, with the written feedback.

Where an ePEP has been rated Amber or Red, we will be in touch with schools and settings early in the summer term to provide support and guidance for the completion of the final ePEP of this academic year.

If you would like to discuss your ePEPs, please contact the Virtual School office or your usual Virtual School Lead and we would be more than happy to meet virtually or in person.

#### 4. Summer Term Focus: Transitions and Goodbyes



##### Year 6 and Year 11 ePEPs – supporting their transition to a new setting

This term will see the final ePEP completed for Year 6 and Year 11 by their current setting. The summer term ePEP for these pupils should be regarded as a transition document. Their new setting will see what the priorities for learning and personal development were in their final term with you. Details of the support and provision in place during the term should be recorded in the Live Records, while transition planning can be added to the Live Records, the Transition tab for Year 6 and the Future Planning tab for Year 11.

As is standard practice, targets should be set at the start of the term for Years 6 and 11 to be worked on during the summer term. Targets should be linked to outcomes, focusing upon skills and knowledge that a pupil will need to develop or demonstrate to achieve the desired outcomes in formal assessments, or according to their SEND pathway including SEMH outcomes.

For example:

- Year 6: *To achieve expected standard in writing in KS2 SATs by using paragraphs to record ideas, to describe characters and settings in narrative writing*
- Year 11: *To achieve estimate outcome of grade 8 in English by making sure that they back up their opinions and understanding by making insightful reference to each text and their wider contexts.*
- SEMH: *To develop confidence in new social situations (through participation in enhanced transition programme). Impact measured through SDQ, specifically Item 16, Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence.*

We would ask that general targets about a pupil settling into their new school or college, are **not** set. Please ensure all targets have measurable outcomes. There are other tabs where details of transition plans can be recorded, such as the Planning and Transition and for pupils in Years 8-11, the Future Planning tabs.

##### In Year Transfers and transitions to new settings

There will also be pupils, separate to a normal phase transfer, who are moving on from your setting either during this term or at the end of the school year. The targets for these pupils also should indicate the areas of learning which are in most need, to inform their next setting.

Please ensure that the pupil's ePEP is filled in as much as possible before they leave your setting. However, once the pupil goes on roll at their new school, we will provide their previous setting with access to the Welfare Call ePEP for two weeks so that all final details of provision and transition can be recorded.

### **Nursery & Post 16 PEPs**

We use the Welfare call ePEP for our children of statutory school age, but pupils in nursery and post 16 settings, should also have PEPs. Please see our webpages for the relevant templates:

[Personal Education Plans | Suffolk County Council](#)

**Nursery PEPs:** We are looking at a way of sharing this document with you, but would also encourage you to ask the nursery provider for this.

**Post 16 PEPs:** PEPs are required for pupils in Year 12 and 13. When they turn 18 the PEP is no longer obligatory, but we would encourage you to complete one, with the young person's consent.

### **Goodbyes**



Our children and young people often find it hard to leave the safety, care and relationships they have experienced in a setting. The absence of these factors can be difficult to manage without an opportunity to formally acknowledge closure. Finding ways to make saying goodbye easier could include ideas such as the ones below, shared with us by Designated Teachers:

- A memory book – photos, messages, pieces of work
- A letter or card from their teachers and key adults
- Refreshments with the Head, DT or key adults
- Making an artefact to remember their experiences

### **Exam results for Year 11**



For those of you with young people in Year 11 who will be sitting externally accredited exams, we will be asking you to share your GCSE/Level 2 assessments results with us when they are released on Thursday 25 August.

Ahead of this date, we will be sending out a form on which we would ask that schools/settings record each pupil's assessment results. It will be sent to the school/setting's Designated Teacher and their exams officer. We would ask that it is returned to us via email to [SuffolkVirtualSchool@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:SuffolkVirtualSchool@suffolk.gov.uk) on **Thursday 25 August but no later than Friday 26 August.**

Alternatively, a copy of their results can be scanned and sent to the same email address using a secure method.

We will use the results to:

- recognise and celebrate the achievements of our pupils and their schools.
- analyse the performance of our cohort.
- retain it for future reference should this information be required to support a young person.

We would ask that results are not shared with us before Thursday 25 August to maintain confidentiality.

Many thanks in advance.

## 5. DT Network Meetings and New DT Induction, 2022



We are continuing with our rolling programme of Designated Teacher Network Meetings and also have additional sessions this term for DTs new to the role. We are also always more than happy to provide direct training to you as a DT on any of the topics in our network meetings, or other particular areas you would like support with.

Please always feel more than welcome to contact us directly, if you would like advice and guidance at any time, we are always more than happy to provide personalised training and support.

For each of the dates offered below, we will run the session twice, once at 10am – 10.45am and then again at 3.45pm-4.30pm. Please simply email our inbox with the dates and times of the sessions you would like to attend, and we will send you a Teams invite: [SuffolkVirtualSchool@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:SuffolkVirtualSchool@suffolk.gov.uk)



<b>Suffolk Virtual School Designated Teacher Network Sessions via Teams</b>		
Please simply email our inbox with the dates and times of the sessions you would like to attend, and we will send you a Teams invite: <a href="mailto:SuffolkVirtualSchool@suffolk.gov.uk">SuffolkVirtualSchool@suffolk.gov.uk</a>		
Date	Times	Theme
<b>Summer Term 2022</b>		
Tuesday 10/5/2022	10-10.45 or 3.45-4.30	Strategic Role of the DT, including the extension of duties
Tuesday 17/05/2022	10-10.45 or 3.45-4.30	Termly ePEP check-in: Writing the final ePEP of the academic year
Tuesday 24/5/2022	10-10.45 or 3.45-4.30	Supporting children previously looked after and the EPAC – Jane Leighton, Specialist Education Psychologist
Tuesday 14/6/2022	10-10.45 or 3.45-4.30	Supporting CiC with SEND
Tuesday 28/6/2022	10-10.45 or 3.45-4.30	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for CiC
Wednesday 6/7/2022	9.30-12 & 1 – 3.30	Induction Training for New DTs – this is a half-day course.
Tuesday 12/7/2022	10-10.45am	Learning Village – resources for EAL learners and learners with additional needs
Tuesday 12/7/2022	3.45-4.30pm	DESTY Emotional Resilience programme – Stephanie O'Malley, creator of DESTY

### Professional Development Opportunity for Schools



After the unfortunate postponement of last term's Peer Support Group training programme, we are pleased to be able to offer the opportunity for schools and settings to take part in September.

The Peer Support Group training course is a professional development programme to support school staff to effectively manage their own wellbeing in relation to their work with those pupils with the most challenging behaviours. It has been welcomed and well received by the schools/settings who participated in the previous programme, and they have gone on to successfully set up their own support networks with their staff.

#### Details of the programme

The programme, delivered by Daniel Sobel's Inclusion Expert organisation, comes in two parts: there will be a series of webinars run by a Lead Practitioner in Group Dynamics, once a fortnight, over a twelve-week period. During every other week, participants will complete a short online task which is linked to the topic covered in the previous week's webinar. The webinars are an hour in length and take place in the evening to avoid conflict with the school day.



The webinars will cover the following areas:

1. **Stages of group formation/dynamics**
2. **Communicating in a group**
3. **Challenges that emerge**
4. **Fostering collaboration and learning from one another**
5. **Leading and setting up a group**
6. **Being creative**

The sessions will have input from the facilitator, draw on the experience of participants in reflective breakout groups to explore and apply the learning.

Activity	Date / Time
Welcome Webinar	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> September 7-8pm
Webinar 1	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> September 7-8pm
Online Module 1	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> September
Webinar 2	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 7-8pm
Online Module 2	Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> October
Webinar 3	Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 7-8pm
Online Module 3	Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> October
<b>October Half Term</b>	<b>October Half Term</b>
Webinar 4	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> November 7-8pm
Online Module 4	Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> November
Webinar 5	Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> November 7-8pm
Online Module 5	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November
Webinar 6	Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> November 7-8pm
Online Module 6	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December

## How to sign up

We would be delighted for you to take part in the programme. The pandemic has placed huge pressure on schools, and the settings that took part in the first round of training found it very beneficial. Not only was it an opportunity to support their own staff, but also a welcome opportunity to meet and share experiences with colleagues in other schools. As it is a virtual training opportunity, there is no limit on the number of places available, but we would advise that no more than two staff members from a setting take part in the programme.

There will be a live webinar via Teams on Tuesday 7 June at 3.30 – 4.30pm where schools and settings who have signed up or are interested in doing so can find out more about the programme from its organisers.

Please email [suffolkvirtualschool@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:suffolkvirtualschool@suffolk.gov.uk) if you would like to sign up to the course or express interest only at this stage.

## 7. Welcomes and a farewell!

During the spring term, we welcomed two new members of the team to the Virtual School and we would like to take this opportunity to introduce them below.

### Jude Kemp



Hello, I am Jude and I am really excited to be part of the Suffolk Virtual School under the new extension of duty to support children with a social worker.

I have extensive experience in schools supporting the wellbeing and extending the outcomes of many young people over 20 years in schools. It is a privilege to be in a position to make a difference and drive change.

I am originally a teacher of French and Spanish, starting my career close to my native Northumbria. Then having met a Londoner, I moved to London before more recently moving to Suffolk.

My school leadership background is in inclusion; for the last 9 years I worked was a DSL and a DT and thrived on making such a difference to so many young lives through education and all the wider support and 'extras' we in schools offer and appreciating and learning the value and importance of multi agency working to achieve the best outcomes for a young person and their family.

I look forward to making a difference and driving change for the betterment of our young people.

### Sarah Squirrell



I'm Sarah and I've recently joined the Suffolk Virtual School as an Assistant Head.

I've taught in school settings in Suffolk and Essex for over 11 years and had responsibility at both school and at Trust level for safeguarding, behaviour and attendance alongside classroom teaching and many other aspects of school and educational life.

Throughout that time I've been fortunate enough to work with a range of fantastic people from students and their families to the wider network of social care, the virtual school and the police and have seen first hand the positive impact that collaborative working and determination can have on impacting young lives.

As I moved through my career I developed a strong sense of wanting to be part of ensuring that all children had access to a positive educational experience and were attending school and am delighted to have joined to Suffolk Virtual school to focus on just that.

I am excited to develop further collaborations with schools and multi agencies to enhance outcomes for our young people.

### Stuart Mason

We also have to say farewell to one of our deputies, Stuart Mason, who after a very distinguished career as a headteacher and Local Government Officer, is retiring in June – he celebrated his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday by running a half marathon in Yorkshire and we know he has many more adventures planned. We will miss his wise counsel and good humour.

## 8. Watch Your Words

We wanted to devote our last item to a campaign launched by our children in care council, C2C called **Watch Your Words**. This has in part come about in response to the high profile use of the term vulnerable learners during the pandemic, as well as other words often used with reference to children in care's circumstances and experiences. We think their ideas provide real food for thought for us all. Please follow the link below to their You Tube video:

['Respite' - Watch Your Words Campaign - YouTube](#)

# #WATCHYOURWORDS

[thesource.me.uk/WatchYourWords](https://thesource.me.uk/WatchYourWords)



**TALKING TO A YOUNG  
PERSON IN CARE OR  
CARE EXPERIENCED?**

## #WATCHYOUR WORDS

INSTEAD OF

**VULNERABLE**

**PLACEMENT**

**CONTACT**

**RESPIRE**

**PATHWAY PLAN**

TRY

**MAY NEED  
EXTRA SUPPORT  
CURRENT HOME/  
HOUSING**

**VISITING FAMILY**

**STAYING OVER/  
SHORT BREAK**

**FUTURE PLAN**

**WHEN IN DOUBT:  
ASK, LISTEN, RECOGNISE.**

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[thesource.me.uk/watchyourwords](https://thesource.me.uk/watchyourwords)



WE CARE  YOUR CARE

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**Our  
Voice**

