

Suffolk Virtual School
Termly Newsletter – Summer 2026

Welcome back! We hope you had a well-deserved, restful break over Easter. We're sure you'll agree that this academic year is whizzing by, and it's hard to believe it's the summer term – again!

This term's newsletter will cover the following:

- Spring term PEP moderation feedback, including the change in ratings
- Key messages for personal education planning for the summer term
- What to do if there is a change of DT in your school or setting
- Annual Reviews for Children in Care, Previously Looked After Children and Children with a Social Worker
- Professional development resources for DTs, DSLs and governors
- Mini-PATH training via the Psychology and Therapeutic Service

Spring term PEP moderation feedback

As always, a massive thank you from us for the carefully constructed plans for our children. Many are making great progress because of the focus on priority learning areas. SMART targets, interventions and effective (and often creative) use of pupil premium funding are enabling them to flourish.

Focus Cohort

Last term, we refined our quality assurance approach to strengthen our focus on children at risk of education instability. Children who experience suspension are at greater risk of disrupted learning, exclusion and poorer outcomes.

In response, we have prioritised the review of ePEPs for this cohort to ensure that plans are sharply focused on maintaining stability, securing progress and promoting inclusion. This includes a stronger emphasis on identifying early support, reducing the likelihood of further suspension, and sustaining engagement in education.

As a result, you will see a revised format to the Evaluation page feedback for these children, reflecting this more focused analysis and our expectation that plans clearly demonstrate how risk is being reduced.

Change to the Ratings

We also simplified the ratings to denote whether a PEP captured an effective plan for a child; those who met this criterion were rated Green. This meant that we did not use the Gold rating but instead highlighted evidence of best practice via email.

Key messages about the ePEP for the summer term

Please ensure that:

- **Transition support** – new year group, new school, new key stage – is detailed in the Pupil Voice and Planning tab. Think about how endings and beginnings can be managed for each child to make the move as smooth as possible.
- the whole ePEP captures the experience of the child for the summer term. Targets should reflect what they are working on **this term, rather than looking ahead to the autumn term**
- the **completion of the ePEP is not dependent upon a PEP meeting taking place** and should not take place during a PEP meeting. If the PEP meeting takes place after the submission date (i.e. within the last two weeks of term), please use it to plan the next term rather than wait to complete the ePEP for the current term
- If a child is **accessing alternative provision**, please ensure that you have agreed for the setting to provide you with reports about their progress. These will need to be referenced in the child's ePEP as evidence of provision and impact and uploaded to their Documents area.

What to do if there is a change of DT in your school or setting

We are aware that, as we approach the final term of the school year, there may be some changes to staffing and roles ahead of September. If you are leaving your role as DT, please do let us know the name and contact details of your replacement and their start date when known.

When they have started their role, Welfare Call will send them an email with log-in details. To activate their account, they will need to log in within 7 days of the email, otherwise the link will expire. Please include this information in your handover.

Annual Reviews for Children in Care, Previously Looked After Children and Children with a Social Worker

If there are any children in these cohorts whose Annual Reviews are outstanding, we ask that these are given priority in the summer term. Please send the completed paperwork to EHCPReviews@suffolk.gov.uk

Virtual School Professional Development for schools

Our regular professional development sessions will continue to take place this term. All staff members, including governors, are welcome to attend. Please see details of our summer term programme and sign-up details:

[Professional development opportunities - Suffolk County Council](#)

Access to session resources on Welfare Call

We understand that not everyone is able to make each session, so we have added the slides from the spring term programme to the Documents section of each child's ePEP. Please feel free to share these with colleagues.

Topics include Managing Effective Transitions, Therapeutic Timetables and our termly ePEP check-in.

If you have any topics that you would like our programme for the new academic year to cover, please do email us – suffolkvirtualschool@suffolk.gov.uk

Online learning modules (flyer attached)

A reminder too that the online learning modules for DTs and other staff are still available. The modules, designed by Anspear Publishing, cover a wide range of topics that relate to all children with a social worker. Each one takes 60-90 minutes to complete and are certificated upon completion. The attached flyer gives further information and instruction on how to sign up. They are free of charge for schools.

The Designated Teacher Award

The University of Suffolk has launched our Designated Teacher Award; this has been developed in collaboration with the Virtual School and the Psychology and Therapeutic Services, with a second cohort running in May 2026.

For expressions of interest please complete the university's form below:

<https://forms.office.com/e/zBSauLeJA9>

and email our office inbox as we are hoping to be able to provide pupil premium towards the £763 course fee: SuffolkVirtualSchool@suffolk.gov.uk

For more information please see:

[Championing Children with Care Experience - The Designated Teacher Award | University of Suffolk](#)

Mini PATH training for school staff

Psychology and Therapeutic Service (flyer attached)

Invest in staff development and person-centred practice, nurturing staff with the confidence and skills to deliver their own Mini-PATHs with children/young people. Try out a wonderful way to support children and young people to share their voice and explore their future in a positive way.

Our virtual group training is offered termly and consists of three sessions where you and a partner will learn the principles around how to facilitate and graphic a Mini PATH.

If you're interested in taking part in our next training cohort, please contact IF@suffolk.gov.uk