

Walsall Virtual School

Personal Education Plan (PEP) Quality Assurance framework and toolkit



Walsall Council



Context

All children in care must have a care plan, of which the PEP is an integral part. The PEP (pre-school to age 18) should be initiated as part of the care plan. It is an evolving record of what needs to happen for children in care, enable them to make at least expected progress and fulfil their educational potential. The PEP should reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning that meets the child's identified educational needs, raises aspirations and builds life chances. The school, other professionals and the child's parents/carers should use the PEP to support achieving those things.

A PEP must be completed within 20 days of the child coming into care and reviewed every term.

The quality of the PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority that looks after the child and the school. Social workers, parents/carers, VSHs, designated teachers and, as appropriate, other relevant professionals will need to work closely together to ensure the PEP is an evolving record of the child's educational journey.

The PEP should cover the full range of education and development needs including:

- Access to a nursery or other high quality early years provision that is appropriate to the child's age (e.g. pre-school playgroups) and meets their identified developmental needs;
- On-going catch-up support for those who have fallen behind with schoolwork (including use of effective intervention strategies);
- Provision of immediate suitable education where a child is not in school (e.g. because of temporary or permanent exclusion);
- Transition support where needed, such as when a child starts attending a new school or returns to school (e.g. moving from pre-school/ early years to primary school, primary to secondary school, from secondary school to further education, or following illness or exclusion) or when a child has a plan for permanence (e.g. placed for adoption) and may change schools as part of that plan;
- School attendance and, where appropriate, behaviour support; and
- Support needed to help the child realise their short and long-term academic achievements and aspirations. This includes:
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national curriculum key stage, and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications;
 - Careers advice and guidance and financial information about further and higher education, training and employment. Discussions about longer term goals should start early and, ideally, well before Year 9 (age 13-14) at school. High aspirations are crucial to successful planning for the future. They should focus on the child or young person's strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve; and
 - Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

Initiating, developing and reviewing the PEP

Wherever the child is placed, their social worker, supported by the authority's Virtual School, should take the lead to:

- initiate a PEP even where a child is without a school place. This includes meeting with appropriate education providers and the carer;
- ensure that where a child is placed in an emergency, the PEP is initiated within 20 working days of them coming into care, wherever they are placed;
- ensure, with the support of others, including the VSH, that the PEP contains a summary of the child's current attainment and progress (including any additional needs such as SEN and mental health needs);
- ensure the PEP is effective and is available for the first statutory review meeting of the care plan; and
- ensure the PEP gives details of who will take the plan forward and specifies timescales for action and review.

Once requesting the initiation of a PEP, the Virtual School will need to work with the child's social worker and relevant designated teacher to facilitate its completion and agree how pupil premium plus (PP+) can most effectively be used to facilitate the child's educational attainment and progress.

VSHs should have a quality assurance role in relation to PEPs. To be effective and high quality, a PEP should:

- be a 'living', evolving, comprehensive and enduring record of the child's experience, progress and achievement (academic and otherwise), and inform any discussion about education during statutory reviews of the child's wider care plan;
- be linked to, but not duplicate or conflict with, information in any other plans held by the child's education setting or responsible authority – e.g. their care plan or Education, Health and Care Plan;
- identify developmental (including any related to attachment and past trauma) and educational needs (short and longer term) in relation to skills, knowledge, subject areas and experiences;
- say what will happen or is already happening to identify and support any mental health needs, including detailing any support that is required or ongoing from mental health specialist support services.
- include SMART longer-term plans for educational targets and aspirations. These should, according to age and understanding, typically focus on: public examinations, further and higher education, managing money and savings, work experience and career plans and aspirations;
- identify actions, with time scales, for specific individuals intended to support the achievement of agreed targets and use of any additional resources (e.g. the pupil premium plus) specifically designated to support the attainment of children in care
- include behaviour management strategies agreed between the VSH and school to help ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that child; and
- highlight access to effective intervention strategies and how this will make/has made a difference to achievement levels

Walsall Quality Assurance Framework

The PEP Quality Assurance Framework includes an audit system to evaluate how effectively multi-agency processes and procedures are being implemented to:

- Improve the quality and timeliness of our PEPs
- Ensure children and young people in care receive timely and effective support from all professionals, when entering the care system and during their time in care.
- Ensure the views of the child are heard and acted upon

Framework for conducting the audits

- PEPs will be assured in a three-tiered approach.
- All schools will have at least 1 PEP quality assured each academic year

Daily Practice

At the first level the child's allocated Virtual School Education Support Officer will quality assure the child's completed PEP using the ePEP internal quality assurance criteria. The PEP will be rated as 'meeting' or 'not meeting' the expected standard. Where a PEP does not meet the expected standard the member of staff will provide details on how to improve the PEP in the QA section and training will be offered to school staff.

Quality Assurance

- PEP is the joint responsibility of the Local Authority and School /other education settings.
- The Social Worker's statutory duty is to initiate a PEP as part of the care plan, and then develop and review the PEP with other professionals. They should be present at all PEP meetings.
- The Designated Teacher's statutory duty is to develop the PEP, make sure it is effective and lead on it within school, although other relevant staff should contribute. They should lead PEP meetings once the SW has initiated.
- The Virtual School statutory duty is to ensure there is an up to date high quality PEP in place for all of its children in care that is focussed on educational outcomes. They work with the social worker and designated teacher to facilitate/ensure PEP completion.
- DfE Stat. Guidance 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children' pp. 24-26 (2014) and pp.15-19 (2018)

The PEP has been completed within timescale

☐ Yes ☐ No

All care information is completed with up to date information

☐ Yes ☐ No

All relevant people have attended and contributed to the PEP

☐ Yes ☐ No

The child's voice is recorded in the PEP

☐ Yes ☐ No

The PEP identifies educational strengths and areas for academic & social/emotional development?

☐ Yes ☐ No

The targets reflect any areas of development identified within the PEP

☐ Yes ☐ No

The targets are written clearly and concisely and identify strategies needed to achieve the target?

☐ Yes ☐ No

To meet the expected standard all section above should be recorded as a Yes

Overall performance.

☐ The PEP meets the expected standard

☐ The PEP does not meet the expected standard

Further Comments

Name of VS worker who completed this

Regular Audits

The second tier will include regular quality assurance dip sampling of PEPs by the phase managers and Deputy Head of the Virtual School. Dip sampling will take place half termly, with a minimum of 10 PEPs from each phase being quality assured each half term. The Virtual School Deputy will feed back to the Virtual School Head.

Themed Audits

The third tier includes a moderation group comprised of designated teachers, social workers, IROs and Virtual School managers. The group will moderate 10 PEPs per term to ensure the journey of the young person is evident in the PEPs. Themes and focuses may include:

- Children new into care
- Children and young people with below 70% attendance
- Young people who CME or NEET
- Children and young people who are in youth offending institutes
- Children and young people transitioning e.g. EYFS to Reception, KS1 – KS2, KS4 to Post 16
- Children and young people in independent schools
- Children placed outside of the borough

With the themed plans, the group will be RAG rating and giving their thoughts on:

- Whether the PEP took place within timescales
- Whether all professionals involved with the young person contributed to the PEP
- Were the child's views evident in the PEP and was there evidence that the child's wishes and feelings had been acted on.
- Whether the PEP provides a good overview of the child's educational needs and any support required has been implemented
- Whether there is evidence of the work of the Virtual School

From this, the Virtual School schools causing concern will be updated and a termly report on the quality assurance of PEPs will be shared at designated teacher termly training sessions.

PEP Quality Assurance

The PEP quality assurance will be undertaken as outlined below to ensure consistency of process across the Virtual School

	Audit Team	Method of assessment	Frequency	Reporting
Daily Practice	Virtual School allocated Education Support officer	ePEP built-in quality assurance matrix	Daily when PEPs have been signed off by designated teachers	Phase managers and Deputy Head
Regular Audits	Phase Managers and Virtual School Deputy Head	Dip sampling of quality assured PEPs to ensure continuity	10 dip sampled per month	Virtual School Head
Themed Group	Virtual School Head Designated teachers Social workers IROs	The use of the Journey of the child audit report template	10 PEPs per term	Director Access & Inclusion Corporate Parenting Board WR4C Performance Board

Virtual School Child Journey Audit Report Template

About the child or young person		Audit information	
Child or Young Person Name:		Date of Audit	
Date of Birth:		Name of Auditors	
Gender:		Auditor Role:	
Ethnicity:		VS allocated Staff member:	
School:		Social Worker:	
Designated Teacher			
Year Group:		Date child or YP came into care:	
SEN:			
Date of First PEP		Date of last PEP	

This audit should focus on the last academic year and what our involvement means for the child and the quality and effectiveness of practice. The auditor may consider the outcomes for the child or young person over a longer period as relevant for the purposes of this audit.

Overview	
<p>Please provide a brief overview of the child or young person and their current education circumstances.</p> <p>The overview should include education history, school related transitions, including any information relating to any issues with attendance/exclusion. Together with any details of SEND/ ECHP.</p>	

Section 1 - Assessing the YP needs (Children new into care)

Initial PEP

Did the PEP meeting take place within timescales (within 20 days of the child or young person coming into care)? If no, please explain why.	
Did all appropriate stakeholders attend the initial PEP (education setting, carers, parents, social worker, Virtual School and any other appropriate professionals)? If no, please explain why.	
Is there evidence that the young person was invited to attend or contribute to the PEP?	
Has prior educational information been included in the initial PEP? And Is there evidence of other agency involvement?	
Is there evidence of other agency involvement i.e. Educational psychologist, CAMHS recorded in the initial PEP etc.	
Is there evidence that the needs of the young person have been identified, and appropriate interventions have been put in place? i.e. SMART targets reflect information in the school profile and discussions in the PEP meeting	
Have the views of the young person been recorded and is there evidence that they have been acted on?	
Is there clear evidence of virtual school involvement in the initial PEP?	
Does the Initial PEP provide a good overview of the child/young person's educational needs and identify support and intervention?	
What is the QA rating of the initial PEP and have reasons for rating been recorded and areas for improvement recorded?	

Section 2 - Assessing the YP needs (Children not new into care)

PEP Reviews

Did the PEP review meeting take place within timescales (12 weeks of last PEP)? If no, please explain why.	
Is there evidence that appropriate stakeholders have attended PEP review meetings? If no, please explain why.	
Has prior educational information been included in the PEP review? Is there evidence of current (this academic year) attainment data recorded in the PEP?	
Is there evidence of current (this academic Year) attainment data recorded in the PEP	
Is there evidence of continuous involvement of other agency involvement i.e. Educational psychologist, CAMHS etc. or new referrals made if required?	
Is there evidence that the needs of the young person have been identified and appropriate interventions have been put in place? i.e. SMART targets reflect information in the school profile and discussions in the PEP meeting	
Have the views of the young person been recorded and is there evidence that they have been acted on?	
Does the quality of recording within the PEP provide a clear picture of the YP educational journey, their needs and views, during their time in care?	
What is the QA rating of the PEP and have reasons for rating been recorded and area for improvement shared?	
Have the educational outcomes for the YP improved because of the Virtual School involvement?	
If the child or young person reads their PEP in the future, would they read what they said/wanted and have evidence of their journey with us?	

Section 8 - Recommendations and Actions required

Action No	Recommendations	What specific actions are required? Have we done anything so far, if yes what?	Action Owner	Target date DDMMYY
1				
2				

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