

The Virtual School - why are we needed?

Evidence shows that historically Looked After Children do not perform as well educationally as their peers. They have often experienced difficult periods in their lives, which can lead to their learning being disrupted. Within the local authority the Virtual School Head is the lead responsible officer for ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve educational experiences and outcomes. A successful education is the single most important factor that will impact on future life chances.

Our aims

- To continue to raise the educational attainment and progress of looked after children so that they can succeed in school and later life
- To narrow the gap in performance between children who are looked after and all children
- To provide challenge and support to education providers to ensure our children and young people receive appropriate provision to meet their needs, including additional support and/or support for emotional/behavioural needs
- To seek/respond to the views and feedback from children and young people and advocate for them and their carers

Our contact details

For more information, or to find out how we can provide support please contact:

Virtual School Head

Chris Snudden ☎ 01603 222575

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Deputy Head of the Virtual School

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General enquiries

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Website

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Norfolk Virtual School for Children in Care



Virtual School
for **Children in Care**

*“Raising aspirations -
Changing attitudes”*

The role of the school

'To work with looked after children as if they were in a single school, liaising with the school they attend, tracking the progress they make and supporting them to achieve as well as possible' OFSTED 2012

The role of Norfolk's Virtual School for Children in Care is to champion the needs of looked after children and young people, ensuring that they benefit from the opportunity to gain a first class education, wherever they may be placed.

How does it work?

The team is situated within Norfolk Children's Service's Achievement team and organised along the lines of a real school – it has a head teacher, governing body, a management team and staff. Our 'pupils' will already be placed in a mainstream school, or sometimes a specialist provision, but additionally they will be on the roll of the Virtual School. Their progress is tracked and support and interventions provided in a targeted way. In this way, our children are provided with an additional layer of specialist support if needed that complements what is already happening in school.

Norfolk's Virtual School is based on strong inter-agency working; involving councillors in their role as corporate parents, key staff within the authority, as well as external partner organisations and children and young people.

Who is on roll?

We have a responsibility for All Looked After Children and young people in the authority; including those that have been placed in schools in other authorities and those from other local authorities who are being educated in Norfolk.

Statutory responsibilities

Monitoring the educational attainment and progress of Looked After Children and raising standards at Key Stages 2, 4 and 5

Monitoring school admissions and ensuring children are placed in a school which best meets their needs

Developing robust procedures to monitor school attendance and ensure Looked After Children attend school regularly

Ensuring that all children have an effective, high quality Personal Education Plan, and linking the allocation of the Pupil Premium Plus monies to the PEP targets

Regularly reporting on the attainment of Looked After Children through the authority's corporate parenting structures

Promoting the importance of listening to and taking account of the child's wishes and feelings about their education

Our staff team:

Tricia Ciappara – Deputy Headteacher
Sarah Hatfield – Senior Education Psychologist
Karen Searle – Specialist Adviser (Post 16 EET)
Wendy Rudd – School Development Manager
Bronwen Richmond – LAC Adviser
Pip Wells – LAC Adviser
Hilary Shaddock – Early Years LAC Adviser
Ruth Toop – Early Years LAC Adviser
Michelle Paton – Key Stage 4 Tutor
Sheena Canning – Specialist Support Assistant
Judith Crisp - Specialist Support Assistant
Lorraine Went - Specialist Support Assistant
Maureen Steward - Specialist Support Assistant
Claire Seiboth - Specialist Support Assistant

What we can offer

Targeted one to one support from our team of Specialist Support Assistants and Key Stage 4 Tutor to help overcome barriers to learning

Comprehensive training and support to professionals in their roles to support looked after children and care leavers, ranging from Designated Teachers for Looked After Children, school governors and early years providers to foster carers, social workers and Post 16 education providers

Innovative interventions, such as Video Interactive Guidance (VIG), which helps to improve communication and relationships between adult and child and A.R.R.O.W. Self-Voice, which helps children improve literacy, reading and communication skills

Opportunities for children and young people to participate in learning experiences out of school such as summer schools, gifted and talented projects and literacy initiatives

Celebration and recognition of the achievements of children and young people

Advice and guidance from specialist Post 16 advisor on future pathways, work and training opportunities

Advice and guidance from specialist LAC Advisers on raising the achievement of children looked after and visits to schools and early years settings

Support and guidance for Personal Education Plans and preparation for OFSTED