



Learn Achieve Celebrate

Information and guidance
for Designated Teachers of Looked After and
Previously Looked After Children in
Northumberland
February 2021

Facebook



Designated Teachers in Northumberland, you now have your own Facebook page!

The purpose of the page is to keep connected, share good practice, ideas and resources. Please feel free to join and support each other, search for us at:

Northumberland VS Designated Teacher

SEND update

The Virtual School's acting Deputy Head, Tara Prescott, fulfils the role of the Virtual School SENDCO. A key part of this role is oversight of a multi-agency action plan following a themed audit which took place last year to find out *what it's like to be a looked after child with SEND in Northumberland*.

To deliver on the action plan we are working with health and social care partners to make improvements in 4 themed areas identified by the audit:

1. Looked after children with SEND are recognised as a priority group
2. Timeliness of decision making
3. Voice of the child
4. Information sharing



The Written Statement of Action (WSOA) which was put in place after the Ofsted Local Area SEND inspection in 2018 has an action to **align looked after and EHCP reviews**. Your SEND support officers and IROs have been working with you on this and the Virtual School is there to facilitate, communicate and advocate if we need to. Get in touch if you want further advice and support.

There is a new post in the SEND Assessment and Monitoring Team, funded by the Virtual School, of **SEN Lead Officer for Looked After Children**. Recruitment is underway and we hope that the successful candidate will be in post very soon.

In January the local authority experienced an **SEND Peer Review**. The outcomes from the review will be shared with us in due course.

Pupil Premium Plus for Looked After Children 2021-22



There will be no change to Northumberland's arrangements for dispersing the Pupil Premium Plus for looked after children in the new financial year, starting 1st April 2021.

The reviewed policy document is available on the [Virtual School webpage](#) in the **Support for Designated Teachers** section here: [Pupil Premium Plus for Looked After Children, arrangements 2021-22](#)

Just a reminder that your termly PP+ payment is dependent on you having submitted a review of the Outcomes section of each looked after child's ePEP. If you haven't already submitted the Outcomes section for Autumn 2020 then it isn't too late, but please hurry as there isn't much time left in the current financial year. Get in touch with us if you need to.

Termly progress reviews

Progress reviews for each looked after child are due termly. You get a message to say that it is due and submit the completed form through the ePEP.

If there are blank fields in the form then it won't send, so please make sure there is something in every box. Don't worry about saying homework has been set if it hasn't been during lockdown.

Our support officer in the Data Unit is Elissa Barker. She will contact you, with Karen Jeff and Debbie Aubrook, if the progress reviews for your children haven't reached us. They can also troubleshoot for you, so please make contact if needed:

- Elissa.barker@northumberland.gov.uk
- Karen.jeff@northumberland.gov.uk
- Deborah.Aubrook@northumberland.gov.uk



Watch this space....



Our ePEP developer is busy creating a form in the ePEP for you submit weekly attendance data for looked after children. It will mean no separate piece of paper or nagging phone calls and emails to follow up requests!

More information will follow, but we know that persistent absence amongst our looked after children is increasing and not necessarily related to Covid 19. When the return to school is complete we will be targeting children to improve their attendance rapidly, and will be asking for your help as DTs to achieve that.

MSET Roadshow

Alongside Northumbria Police, Children's Services are holding three Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking (MSET) Roadshows on **24th February at 10am and 1pm, and 23rd March at 2pm.**

The aim of the session is to increase awareness and understanding of the MSET process including the referral criteria and offer of support. The Roadshows will cover:

- MSET's function
- Referral Criteria
- Paperwork
- Disruption Plans and Best Practice Examples
- MSET Panel's offer - How we help



To book a place on one of the sessions, please email elise.mielnik@northumberland.gov.uk with your date/time preference and include your job role, Head Teacher and school.

Our acting Deputy VSH, Tara Prescott, is a panel member and will be presenting at the events.

What the DTWG is getting up to



Every half term the Designated Teacher Working Group meets, a group of volunteer DTs who help us to understand what your needs are and how to best support you in your role. They are very good at telling us what is going well and what they are concerned about.

There are two key pieces of work underway at the moment:

1. Reviewing how we ask for progress updates for looked after children with special needs
2. Reviewing the Pupil Views section of the ePEP

Your feedback is important to us too, so if you have any suggestions about either workstream then please get in touch – contact us directly or use the eslac.info@northumberland.gov.uk mailbox.

Contact Us

Here are contact details for teams and services that you might need when working with looked after children. Let us know if you need any others:

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|---|----------------------------------|
| • OneCall 01670 536 400 | • CYPS 01670 502 700 |
| • ESLAC 01670 622779 | • Family Placement 01670 626 262 |
| • Email: eslac.info@northumberland.gov.uk | • IROs 01670 624888 |

Virtual School Headteacher: Jane Walker



Northumberland
County Council