

Worcestershire Virtual School News

Issue 5

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Welcome back to the start of what is already another busy term. We hope you all had a good break and managed to celebrate the festivities safely. The Spring term is likely to be equally as challenging as previous Covid terms, and the Virtual School once again wishes to thank you for your continued commitment to supporting our most vulnerable learners through these challenging times.

Remote Learning

Our position, as outlined on Tuesday 6th Jan in an email to you, took into account DfE's expectation that CLA/PLAC should attend school (that is our starting point) BUT we acknowledge that there might be exceptions to this. Every case **should** consider the child/young person's needs on an individual basis. The context for individual schools should also be viewed with your input.

When individual cases arise, we **must all consider** the following for each CLA/PLAC:

- are they behind academic age-related expectations?
- have they been making progress against their own challenging targets?
- are they on SEN register and need extra help at school?
- what type of support can they expect at school during lock down?
- what are the barriers to learning in school (capacity and space)?
- what will the offer be in reality if they are being educated in school?
- what type of learning support could they expect to receive if they stay at home?
- is it a conducive environment if they were to learn from home?
- how likely are they able to engage in home learning e.g. carers knowledge, access to appropriate digital device, child/young person's ability to learn independently?
- what impact would it have on their mental health should they attend or not attend school?
- how challenging might transition back into school be if they were to stay at home for several weeks (maybe months)?
- could a part time timetable at school meet needs effectively?

Schools: Our conversations with schools will be supportive discussions. They will encourage and support children/young people to learn in school where deemed appropriate for them to do so.

Social Care: It is essential that we all have a shared understanding with our social care colleagues who should also be making reference to the points for consideration, listed above, when communicating with carers. Both the Virtual School and you as Designated Teacher will provide them with the education context for individual CLA, from this viewpoint they will then be able to communicate this to carers

School Attendance

During the coming weeks whilst schools are only open to vulnerable learners and children of key workers, please can you ensure that you inform your PEP CO/Area Learning Advocate of any CLA pupil who is **not attending** and whether or not they are accessing the remote learning on offer to them. Please can you also provide information on the type of remote learning being provided e.g. online lessons, resources, 1:1 for pupils with SEN etc. This will help us to collectively ensure that all our CLA are in receipt of the most appropriate form of education provision at this time.

Personal Education Plan - Virtual Meetings on Microsoft Teams

A quick reminder that all meetings, including PEPs, will be taking place virtually for the foreseeable future. It is paramount that all CLA are tracked termly as this information is fed into the wider Children in Care Care Plan and reviewed by Education, Social Care and Independent Reviewing Officers.

Pupil progress may be a challenge during this period of lock down. We will therefore focus some of the discussion on your overall curriculum support package, the child/yp social emotional and mental health needs and a discussion about their future needs.

You will receive a Teams link from your PEP Co/ALA prior to the meeting, please ensure you have allocated one hour for each PEP and that you are able to join the meeting in a private/confidential space. Given the sensitive nature of these meetings it is imperative that confidentiality is maintained.

Trauma Informed Schools training: Cohort 3

Worcestershire Virtual school are continuing their exciting journey with Trauma Informed Schools UK (TISUK), and we are now recruiting schools to join our cohort 3.

Worcestershire Virtual School will **fully fund** the **TISUK Diploma (Level 5) in Trauma and Mental Health for ONE member of staff.**



On completion of the 10 days training the member of staff will hold TISUK Practitioner Status.

The virtual training dates are as follows:

15th & 16th March, 4th & 5th May, 14th & 15th June, 12th & 13th July and 20th & 21st September.

The deadline for applications is **Friday 29th January 2021**, we will then notify the successful schools by **Friday 12th February 2021**.

Please contact **Jade Busby** to discuss further.

01905 846125 / jbusby@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

SEMH Advice

Emotional wellbeing is a priority for all children, particularly Children Looked After who have often suffered multiple adverse early life experiences. The current situation with lockdowns, changes to school routines, bubble closures, inability to see friends and uncertainty around exams has seen a rise in children/young people struggling with their mental health. If you have a student you have particular concerns about CAMHS CAST are now operating an advice telephone line. **The number is 01562 514549**

Children's Mental Health Week is coming up on 1st February, and the theme this year is 'express yourself'. There are lots of teaching resources for schools, please click the link to find out more.

www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/resources-for-schools/advice-for-parents-and-carers-talking-mental-health-with-young-people-at-primary-school/

We are here to support you and our children looked after/previously looked after. Please call or email, using the details below or visit our website.

Virtual School Helpline 01905 844913
virtualschool@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/virtualschool>