



No: 065

Revised 05 May 2015

One Minute Guide: Looked After Children - Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

What is this about?

In July 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) reissued its statutory guidance '[Promoting the education of looked-after children](#)' to take into account the amendments made by the 'Children and Families Act 2014' and replacing 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children 2010'. As this guidance is statutory it must be followed unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify departing from it.

What is new?

A key section of the new guidance refers to PEPs and states all looked after children (LAC) should have a PEP which is part of the child's care plan or detention placement plan. The broad areas of information that must be covered in the PEP are specified in *Schedule 1 (para 2) of the 'Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 as amended*. The PEP must now include the contact details of the Virtual School Headteacher (VSH – statutory post to discharge the LA's duty to promote the educational achievement of LAC) for the local authority that looks after the child.

To meet the requirements of this guidance, and the changes being experienced across the education sector, the Virtual School have redesigned and rewritten the Redbridge PEPs to make them 'fit for purpose'. Instead of one generic PEP, there are now five phase-related PEPs: Early Years (covering 0-2 years, 2-4 years and 4-5 years); Primary; Secondary; Post-16; HE/University.

The guidance stipulates:

- All LAC must have a care plan, of which the PEP is an integral part;
- All involved in the PEP process – social worker, designated teacher (DT), carer, young person, Virtual School (VS) – should use it to support the personalised learning of the child;
- The PEP (pre-school to age 18) is an evolving record to enable the child to fulfil their potential, raise aspirations and build life chances; and
- The quality of the PEP is the joint responsibility of the LA, social worker, carer and DT – they should involve the child and other relevant professionals as appropriate.

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

- Access to high quality early years provision meeting that is appropriate to the child's age and meets their developmental needs;
- On-going catch-up support and effective intervention strategies;
- Provision of immediate suitable education where a child is not in school;

- Transition support where this is needed;
- Support to help the child realise short/long term academic achievements/aspirations – including support to achieve expected progress and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications;
- Out-of-school learning activities / study support / leisure interests; and
- School attendance and, if appropriate, behaviour support.

Initiating, developing and reviewing the PEP:

- Wherever the child is placed, the social worker supported by the Virtual School for Children in Care (VS) should take the lead on initiating a PEP within 10 days ; ensuring it contains a summary of the child's current attainment and progress; reviewing it termly and conducting an annual review prior to statutory review.
- The DT leads on use in school and ensures the child's progress towards education targets is monitored.
- The VS Headteacher has the quality assurance role in relation to PEPs to ensure they are effective and of high quality; be a 'living' , evolving , comprehensive and enduring record of the child's experience, progress and achievement; identify developmental and educational needs; contain SMART short and long term educational targets and aspirations; actions and timescales to meet educational targets and aspirations; highlight access to effective intervention strategies and how they will make a difference.
- The VSH to make arrangements for the flow of information to ensure the VSH, DT, carer, child and where appropriate the parent have a PEP copy.
- The VSH should ensure that monitoring arrangements are in place so that PEP actions and activities are implemented without delay.
- The VSH should make arrangements for the PEP to be reviewed termly.
- The social worker for the child looked after should:
 - Not make significant decisions about the education of the child looked after without reviewing the PEP in consultation with the VSH/DT/Carer/IRO
 - Alert IRO to any significant changes to the child's PEP so that a decision can be made whether a review of the care plan is required
 - Ensure information about educational progress and support needs is up-to-date before statutory review meetings
 - Ensure up-to-date PEP information is fed into statutory reviews
 - Act on changes to meet the child's education needs identified by IRO.
- IROs should ensure: PEP effectiveness is scrutinised as part of statutory review; if a child has special educational needs the PEP review acknowledges these needs; any unresolved concerns about a child's PEP or education provision is raised with social workers and the VSH.

How can I find out more?

If you require further information, please refer to the full [guidance](#) or contact the Virtual School via 020 8708 3939.