



Supporting the Education for Children on a CP/CiN Plan

Guidance for Children's Social Care Staff

By the Lancashire Virtual School

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Contents

1. [The role of the Virtual School](#)
2. [CiN/CP meeting and plan expectations](#)
3. [Attendance](#)
4. [Suspensions/Exclusions](#)
5. [Attainment and Progress](#)
6. [Early Years Funded Places](#)
7. [Post-16 young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\)](#)

Context

On average, children with a social worker do less well than their peers at every stage of their education.

In 2018, 50% of children who had a social worker in the last six years were able to achieve a good level of development in the early years, compared to 72% of children who never had a social worker.

Pupils who had a social worker in the year of their GCSEs were around half as likely to achieve a strong pass in English and Maths than their peers, and at the end of Key Stage 4 were around 3 times less likely to go on to study A levels at age 16, and almost 5 times less likely to enter higher education at age 18.

Despite the many barriers to learning vulnerable children experience, we know that good quality planning and support can make a significant difference.

Social Workers can make a huge contribution working with others to increase achievement and close these gaps.



1. School for Children on a CiN/CP Plan

A strategic leadership role to champion the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

2. CiN/CP Meeting and Plan Expectations - Summary

- **Education MUST be on the agenda for every core group meeting, child protection conference and child in need review. This discussion should include attendance, risk of suspension/exclusion and attainment and progress.**
- **Any educational concerns MUST then be included in the CP/CiN plan with appropriate actions and support identified.**
- **Concerns that MUST be on plans include:**
 - **Attendance is below 90% (classed as persistently absent) or attendance is declining.**
 - **The child/young person (CYP) has received suspensions or is at risk of them or exclusion.**
 - **They are significantly behind with regards to their attainment.**
 - **Their educational progress has slowed.**
 - **A child eligible for early years funded places is not accessing provision.**
 - **A post-16 young person is not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)**



3. Attendance

"Attendance is Everyone's Business" Children's Commissioner, February 2023

Pupils with higher attainment at KS2 and KS4 have lower levels of absence over the key stage compared to those with lower attainment.

Prior to the pandemic in 2018/19 the average absence rate for all pupils was 4.8% and 10.7% for CiN.

Prior to the pandemic in 2018/19 the average persistent absence rate (below 90% attendance) for all pupils was 11.2% and 30.5% for CiN.

For children with a social worker, attending school is also a protective factor, offering a safe space when home may not be, away from the threat of gangs, crime, or exploitation

In their recent report "Missing Children, Missing Grades" Published in November 2023, the children's commissioner recommendations include that:

- Every public body which works with children with a history of absenteeism should make attendance their priority.
- To ensure that local government departments are held accountable for their efforts to reduce absenteeism.

Children's social care staff have a crucial role to play with supporting and promoting good attendance.

How Children's Social Care staff can support towards improved attendance.

- Ensure school/setting attendance is discussed at every core group meeting, child protection conference and child in need review.
- If there are concerns regarding attendance e.g., they are classed as persistently absent with an attendance of below 90% or if their attendance is falling (early identification and intervention is crucial), this **MUST** appear in the plan and appropriate actions identified.
- Here is a guide for social workers created by Office of the Chief Social Worker for Children and Families:



Supporting social workers - attendance.

Working with schools/settings – key questions

- Has the school/setting been using the School Attendance Support Checklist?



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- Has the school/setting followed the [EBSA \(Emotionally Based School Avoidance\) guidance](#) (if appropriate)?
- What assessments/steps have been taken to understand contributory factors to non-attendance?
 - Round robin (staff information), Pupil voice activities, assessments of possible learning needs, SDQ (strengths and difficulties questionnaire), etc.
- What are the current expectations? I.e., timetable in place – is this clear and consistent?
- If the CYP is on a part-time timetable*, has the Local Authority (LA) been notified and what are the reasons for this?
- Is there a clear support and attendance plan in place? How often is this reviewed?
- Does the CYP have an identified key adult that they are re/building a relationship with? How is contact maintained?
- What in school support is available for CYP and family? MHST(Mental Health Support Team)/Counselling/Parenting Groups/ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- Does the CYP have any SEND (special educational needs or disabilities) or an EHCP (education health and care plan) – as the inclusion team should be involved.
- Have referrals been made or advice sought from other services?

Effective Planning

- School's Support and Attendance Plan should be reflected in CiN/CP Plan
 - If there is no school plan, multi-agency forum should be used to develop a plan.
- Concerns should be clear and specific – including attendance %
- Target attendance % should be set as a point to be worked towards, these should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timed)
- Clarity of what reasonable adjustments/skills development interventions/support for parents is in place - who is doing what?
- Education reviews are likely to be more frequent than multi-agency plan reviews. If the school do not have their own planning document, they could use the education plan created by the Virtual School. Visit the Personal Education Plan section of our website: www.lancashire.gov.uk/virtualschool.



*Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

4. Suspensions/Exclusions

The Department for Education has published statutory guidance for suspensions and permanent exclusions from schools ([Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance September 2023](#)).

Terminology

Suspension: where a pupil is temporarily removed from the school. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods¹⁷ (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period.

Permanent Exclusion: when a pupil is no longer allowed to attend a school (unless the pupil is reinstated). The decision to exclude a pupil permanently should only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.



Key points for social workers regarding the suspension/exclusion process

- Headteachers **MUST** (without delay after making their decision) notify a social worker without delay if a pupil is suspended or permanently excluded.
- Social workers **MUST** be invited to the Governors Disciplinary Panel meeting following a suspension or permanent exclusion and given an opportunity to make representations to the panel.
- If the Governors uphold a permanent exclusion, parents can request an Independent Review Panel (IRP) – the pupil's social worker **MUST** be invited to attend this.

For further guidance and information on the process, please see the document: *Suspension and Exclusion Process - The Social Worker's*



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Further Guidance:

[Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance September 2023](#)

[If you require any advice or support you can contact the local area education office or the local Inclusion Service area team](#)

How Children's Social Care staff can support towards reducing suspensions and exclusions.

- Ensure any risk of suspension/exclusion is discussed at every core group meeting, child protection conference and child in need review.
- Early notification and intervention is crucial.
- SMART targets **MUST** be included in the CiN/CP plan if a child is at risk of suspension/exclusion or if they have already been suspended.



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- Has the LCC behaviour pathway been followed?
- Ensure that the school are following the correct procedures for suspensions and exclusions.
- Ensure the school are following their own behaviour policy – you can challenge them if they haven't followed the correct procedure, but also feel confident to challenge them to ensure they make allowances and reasonable adjustments for these vulnerable children.



- See the document: **Considerations for CYP who have been suspended or excluded** for the things you need to consider during this process, especially when attending and GPDC (Governors' Pupil Discipline Committee) or IRP (Independent review panel)



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- If a child has been suspended, ensure there is a clear re-integration plan in place for when they return with the required support/interventions/adjustments in place – this should be detailed within the CiN/CP plan also.
- Does the CYP have any SEND (special educational needs or disabilities) or an EHCP (education health and care plan) – as the inclusion team should be involved.

5. Attainment and Progress

On average, children with a social worker do less well than their peers at every stage of their education.

How Children's Social Care staff can support towards improving attainment and progress.

- Ensure attainment and progress is discussed at every core group meeting, child protection conference and child in need review.
- What assessments/steps have been taken to understand contributory factors to low attainment/slowness of progress?
 - Round robin (staff information), Pupil voice activities, assessments of possible learning needs, SDQ
- If the child is behind academically or progress is slowing, clear SMART actions **MUST** be included within the CiN/CP plan, detailing support and interventions.
- Ensure that an education plan is in place within the school/setting which states how attainment and progress will be monitored and sets how any identified needs or gaps will be addressed. This may be on a document such as an individual education plan (IEP) or a pupil passport.
- Education reviews are likely to be more frequent than multi-agency plan reviews. If the school do not have their own planning document, they could use the education plan created by the Virtual School. Visit the education plan section of our website: www.lancashire.gov.uk/virtualschool.
- Is it appropriate for the statutory assessment process to be started? This is a good method of assessing need and applying a graduated response to meet these needs.



- Does the CYP have any SEND (special educational needs or disabilities) or an EHCP (education health and care plan) – as the inclusion team should be involved.

6. Early Years Funded Places

We would like to see all children on a CiN or CP plan accessing their funded places at an early year setting.

The Benefits of attending these sessions:

- To keep children safe, by enabling nurseries and childminders to report safeguarding concerns early.
- To support children to develop positive behaviours and routines.
- Children to make few friends and build their confidence.
- Children to learn and develop through fun and play.
- Improve speech and language skills.
- Children prepare for starting school.
- Wider benefits to parents/families (e.g. free time to do things that improve their own well-being, training, employment etc)

2-Year-Old Entitlements and Eligibility

- Up to 15 hours funded childcare per week (max 570 hours per year)
- Children in Need
- Children with a Child Protection Plan
- Additional vulnerable groups also qualify.

3&4 Year-Old Universal Entitlements

- Up to 15 hours funded childcare per week (max 570 hours per year)
- Applies to all children from the term after their 3rd birthday.

3&4 Year Old Extended Entitlements

- Up to 30 hours funded childcare per week (max 570 hours per year)
- Most working families qualify.
- Earning the equivalent of 16 hours at that national or living wage, not exceeding earnings of £100k per year each parent

How Children's Social Care staff can help CiN/CP children access funded places.

- Check your caseload and ensure all eligible CiN/CP are accessing their funded places.
- If they are not, speak to the parents/carers and encourage them. Promote to them the benefits of this.



- Ensure funded places are discussed at every core group meeting, child protection conference and child in need review.
- If the child is not accessing their funded places, this **MUST** be included within the CiN/CP plan as to the next steps for this.
- Ensure the Education tab on LCS is correct. If the child is not accessing, please add this as a "gap in education" and add the reason for this.
- If moving from CLA to CiN/CP, if additional hours were funded by CSC, ensure what will happen is discussed and planned for to ensure continuity.

7. Post-16 young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

How Children's Social Care staff can help CiN/CP access EET (Education, Employment and Training)

- Ensure EET is discussed at every core group meeting, child protection conference and child in need review.
- Ensure that clear SMART actions, that lead to EET, are detailed on CiN and CP plans.
- Any unmet needs/reasons which have resulted in the young person not being in EET should also be included within the plan.
- Early intervention is crucial if possible: Work closely with the secondary school to ensure those children without an intended destination or those likely not to move into education, employment or training are supported and planned for (ensure the Gatsby Benchmarks have been followed which state what good careers guidance looks like).
- If the young person is EET ready, you can help them explore the different options available to them such as full-time education, part-time courses, apprenticeships, employment, volunteering or other schemes/courses. A list of Lancashire provision (EET provision list) can be found on your service Teams channel.
- Contact the local Family Hub/Children and Family Wellbeing Service to find out the groups they run such as employability support groups.
- The **Youth Futures Team** can support young people in the Burnley, Preston of Lancaster areas (and county-wide for young people in vulnerable groups). They can provide high quality and impartial advice and guidance, with the aim of supporting them to reengage in a positive EET destination, raising their

aspirations and securing positive outcomes for their futures. They can be contacted here: youthfutures@lancashire.gov.uk

- Visit the Youth Zone website: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/jobs-education-and-training/careers-advice/> for information on EET.
- Young People can also contact Talkzone for further information, advice and guidance: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/get-in-touch/>
- The Lancashire Start website: <https://lancashire.startprofile.com/page/home-page> has a wide range of information on EET.

*Gatsby Benchmarks

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance.

