

Norfolk Virtual School

for Looked After and Previously Looked After

Issue 3

Spring Term 2020

Welcome!

It seems hardly possible to be drafting a newsletter for a new year and a new term. I hope from the newsletter you can have a taste of the wide range of work we are involved with and gain an update about the plans we have for the future. Suzie returns to school after being with us for a term on secondment. The expertise and skills Suzie has brought to the team have been really welcome and the links we have made will strengthen our partnerships. Many of you will have worked with Kate who returns after maternity leave and we welcome Hannah to the team who joins us in a new post as our Key stage 2 achievement lead. This year we will be running our first KS2 workshops with PETxi building on our successful GCSE revision programme. Thank you for all your nominations as part of the Waterstones Giving Tree. I am writing this in an office that was recently full of books. This year the team wrapped over 800 books and arranged for them to be delivered to the children and young people. We also joined the 'Dolly Parton Imagination Library' and children under 5 who are signed up have already received 2 books. Our service for previously looked after children is now well established and the training has had excellent feedback. The Virtual School always welcome your feedback, please do get in touch if you would like to talk about any projects for the future. In the meantime, I hope to see you at our Conference 'Changing the narrative' on 5 February. If you have young people in key stage 4 or 5 we I also hope you will also sign up for our Post 16 conference on 25 March where the focus will be on 'trauma and attachment'. You can find all the details at the end of this newsletter or on our website, follow us on twitter @SchoolCic for the latest updates.

Keeley White, Virtual School Head

Whitlingham Adventure Day

In October 2019 we successfully ran an activity day with Whitlingham Adventure for 8-16 year olds. Set within Whitlingham Country Park, Whitlingham Adventure offers a wide range of water and land-based activities for children and adults. The day consisted of activities in stand-up paddle boarding and sailing. No experience was necessary for the children to participate, and the ability to swim was not essential as wetsuits and buoyancy aids were provided. Students were taught team building techniques and encouraged to discover a sense of adventure while challenging themselves to learn new skills. We look forward to creating more exciting activity days with Whitlingham Adventure throughout 2020.



Petxi Revision Workshops

GCSE revision sessions took place during October half term. PETXi worked with learners in Years 10 and 11. Day 1 focused on writing skills for English and day 2 focused on developing confidence in Maths. It was great to see the learners start to believe that the grade improvement is within their grasp.



Comms Team

The Virtual School have been working in partnership with Norfolk Young Arts and the UEA to train a group of young people to promote our events throughout the year. The comms team have developed a range of skills. Day 1 in October half term focused on writing about events, reviewing, blogs, digital communications and social media. Day 2 focused on audio recording and included a tour of the TV Studios and Media Suites at UEA. The December session saw them working on promoting the summer celebration event. Sessions included producing a short film trailer, creating a magazine article and designing a social media campaign to promote the celebration event.



Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting programme for children aged 0-5 operated by the Dollywood Foundation, Dolly Parton's own charity. Their mission is to inspire a lifelong love of books and reading by placing books into the hands of children. This scheme has successfully run throughout the UK, Ireland and Scotland, and we are now lucky enough to bring this to the Norfolk Virtual School.

All children enrolled in the Imagination Library programme receive a free book in the post every month from birth until their 5th birthday. They can be registered at any age between birth and five. The books are personally addressed to each individual child. All titles in the Imagination Library are published by Penguin Random House (PRH) and carefully selected by a panel of experts in early childhood development and reading. Each age group from birth upwards receives a different book, all of which are age-appropriate, except for the first book, 'The Tale of Peter Rabbit'. This is a special edition with a foreword from Dolly herself. A child enrolled from birth to their fifth birthday will build their own home library of up to 60 books.

The objectives that stem from this are to develop emergent literacy skills that are essential before a child can learn to read (letter and sound recognition, concentration, knowledge of how a book operates i.e. front to back etc), contribute to a rich home learning environment and promote school readiness. The first wave of books were delivered to Norfolk Looked After Children in mid-November and we look forward to being able to grow the program.



Waterstones Giving Tree

In the lead up to Christmas, Norfolk County Council Children's Services and Waterstones teamed up again to launch the 2019 Giving Tree appeal, a Christmas project aimed at bringing joy to the county's looked after children. The tree, in the Castle Street store, was decorated with hundreds of tags representing a child and the book they would like to receive for Christmas. The Giving Tree is organised by the Virtual School for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

This year we had more than 750 nominations for children in the county, with some specifying books or authors and others seeking a certain genre or type of book, which was a huge increase from the previous year.



Achievement and Engagement Scheme

Our Achievement and Engagement Incentive Scheme is being offered again to all Year 11 Norfolk Looked After Children.

For those taking exams we will be offering an incentive based upon examination results. Pupils that achieve their predicted grade (taken from Spring term PEP predicted grades) will receive £5 per subject. Those that exceed their predicated grades will receive £10 per subject. For those pupils attending a specialist provision or not taking exams we will make a payment based upon their achievement and engagement. This information will be gauged from the PEP record and a conversation with the school where appropriate.

Please speak with your Year 11 Looked After Children about this incentive. This incentive could make a real difference in motivating them to make the most of the last few months before the examination season. To enable us to collect the results in August, and to allow payments to be made without delay, please make sure we have an e-mail address for the Examination Officer for your school.



Glen Redman DT Network Co-Ordinator (West)

I have been a designated teacher for looked after children at a secondary school in King's Lynn for 3 years. I have found these past 3 years to be the most challenging but incredibly rewarding 3 years of my career so far. Everyday working with these children has brought up new challenges, new opportunities to enrich their lives and more importantly, provide them with the support network they need in order to reach their full potential.

During this academic year I have been looking at ways of improving the LAC provision for pupils in West Norfolk. This has included; feeding back on training provided to designated teachers in the area, coordinating network meetings, assisting with PEP and review meetings, creating links with organisations like Beacon East and providing enrichment opportunities for LAC pupils in the area.

We were recently able to help coordinate training in West Norfolk for previously looked after children ran by Harriet Tunnicliff and Darren Webster. This training session was excellent with Harriet and Darren being very well informed and able to communicate the information and advice incredibly well and I would encourage any designated teacher who hasn't already attended this training session to do so if they offer it again. I was then able to share the information of this training session to designated teachers of the other schools within the trust I work in. This has allowed us to ensure that the message we are trying to deliver for looked after and previously looked after children is reaching a much greater audience.

The biggest change I have made within my own school in relation to LAC provision is giving them a voice. Before I was DT in our school, looked after children had little presence, rarely spoken about and certainly not at the forefront of teachers minds. This was not acceptable to me. So now I ensure that I regularly speak to staff in briefings/ meetings about the current progress of looked after children, do book trawls, learning walks, speak to governors about the LAC provision we provide and ensure that I speak to all staff on the first day back in September to ensure every member of staff is aware if they have looked after children in their classroom.

Last week I spoke to staff about attachment and trauma for LAC and PLAC following training on the topic which included brain development and seating plans with their needs in mind. This was really well received with many staff coming to me asking for advice afterwards. If I were to give any piece of advice to new DT's it would be this; ensure you have the ear of SLT and do not let them forget about LAC and PLAC within your school. The more people fighting for them the better.

Exciting enrichment opportunity for Key Stage 4 Looked after and previously looked after children.

We have been able to establish a new and exciting link with a TEF (Teaching excellence framework) gold standard university. Through this link we can offer KS4 LAC and PLAC the opportunity to have a university experience day. During this visit the pupils will be able to experience full university life with a tour of the campus, visit lecture halls, talking to current university students, a look at current courses and options as well as lunch on the day free of charge. This is a fantastic opportunity for any pupils you feel the university pathway is an option for in the future. The aim of the day is to provide these pupils with options for the future and broaden their horizons as well as showing them what their future prospects could look like.

The university experience day will be taking place on **Tuesday 21st April**. If you have any looked after or previously looked after pupils, you feel would benefit from this experience please contact **Glenn Redman** at;

g.redman@springwoodhighschool.co.uk

What Survival Looks Like

Tess Terza, (Team Manager Breckland) and Jason Barnes (Leaving Care Team Manager Breckland) have been working hard to promote these fantastic resources with schools. If you have not already done so then we would highly recommend that you download these free handouts for your child or young person's teacher or trusted adult at school/college to help them understand what survival states look like in the school/college environment and what they can do to help ground them and subsequently improve their learning. A link to these resources can be found on our website and can be accessed via the following link:

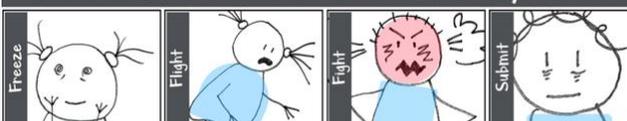
http://www.innerworldwork.co.uk/?page_id=45

There are also work books and animations that accompany these resources.



What Survival Looks Like In Secondary School

What Survival Looks Like In Primary School



Survival In Primary School: Quick Reference Guide

UASC Training Day

7th November 2019 saw professionals and carers come together at Woodside Road (Norwich) to focus on how we can work together to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) and young people in education. The day started with a session from Abraham Eshetu Wagagne on cultural competences and understanding. He gave an insightful talk about the journey that young people undertake before reaching the UK and the associated trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder that they experience. Tania Ingram (EAL Advisor) gave an overview into how good EAL practice in schools can support UASC. Other sessions included the PEP process for UASC. This referred to the statutory guidance, recommended practice and the UASC EAL profile. The afternoon sessions looked at the Virtual School EAL offer including EAL assessments, first language assessments, cognitive assessments and EAL SEND assessments. The day concluded with a demonstration of how Rosetta Stone can be used to support language development and how language line (translation service) and other technologies can be used to help with translation.

You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view - until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.

Harpet Lee

Publicity, Marketing and Rewards

The Virtual School is keen to recognise the good work that DTs in schools are doing with our young people. We also want to congratulate our young people on their individual achievements. With this in mind we are in the process of creating a series of 'well done' postcards and certificates that Advisors will be sending out to schools.



Previously Looked After Children January 2020 Census

A reminder that to receive the Pupil Premium Plus funding for Previously Looked After Children they must be recorded on your January Census as previously looked after. Families will need to declare their child's previously looked after status to the school and provide evidence such as an adoption order, special guardianship order, child arrangement order, residence order or letter from the local authority that placed them. Families do not need to declare this each year and only need to do this when their child starts at a new school. Guidance for Pupil premium: allocations and conditions of grant 2019 to 2020 has been updated and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2019-to-2020>

Designated Teacher Training for Previously Looked After Children

During the Autumn term we ran two courses for Designated Teachers about supporting Previously Looked After Children at the PDC, Norwich and Springwood High School, King's Lynn. The course offers a deeper understanding of previously looked after children and the support that could be accessed by their families and schools. An overview of statutory duties in respect of this cohort as well as covering Pupil Premium Plus and best practice in engaging families in conversations about their child or young person. It offers a practical toolkit to take back to school to support both attendees and their colleagues to promote the educational achievement of this cohort. The courses were well attended, and we received fantastic feedback from attendees. We will be running one further course before the end of the academic year and places are already starting to fill up. To make a booking visit www.educatorsolutions.org.uk

Date: **Wednesday 1st July 2020** Time: **9:30—12:30**

Venue: **Breckland Council Offices, Dereham, NR19 1EE** Course Ref: **LAC-0720-T004**

Spring Term Training

****Training for Designated Teachers***

- 26th February 2020, Kings Centre, Great Yarmouth
13:00- 16:00 (£50 per delegate)

****Producing Quality Personal Educational Plans (PEPS) No cost to delegates***

- 15th January 2020, Breckland Council Dereham, 14:00 – 16:00
- 22nd January 2020, PDC, Norwich, 14:00 – 16:00
- 29th January 2020, Great Yarmouth Library, 14:00 – 16:00
- 4th March 2020, Breckland Council, Dereham, 14:00 – 16:00
- 11th March 2020, Kings Centre, Great Yarmouth, 14:00 – 16:00
- 18th March 2020, PDC, Norwich, 14:00 – 16:00

**Cancellation fee applies for non-attendance*

DT Network Meetings (PIVATS and Previously Looked after bitesize CPD)

- 11th February 2020, PDC, Norwich, 16:30 – 17:30
- 12th February 2020, Springwood High School. Kings Lynn, 16:30 – 17:30
- 13th February 2020, Breckland Council, Dereham, 16:30 – 17:30

More information about our training and events can be found on the Virtual School website.

<http://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/vs4cic>

To make a booking visit www.educatorsolutions.org.uk

Virtual School Conferences

Make sure you have secured your place on our conferences (suitable for any colleagues working with Looked after children)

Designated Teacher and Social Worker Conference 'Changing the Narrative'

Wednesday 5th February 2020 John Ines Centre (Norwich) Keynote Speakers - Jaz Ampaw-Farr and Luke Rogers. There will be input from other speakers and a marketplace throughout the day.

Post 16 Conference 'Attachment and Trauma Informed Practice'

Tuesday 25th March 2020 South Green Park (Mattishall, Dereham)
Keynote Speaker – Sarah Naish, plus workshop sessions from Christine Davies (Trauma Informed School) and Professor Gill Schofield (UEA Secure Base model)

Contact Us

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