**Norfolk Virtual School for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Newsletter**

**Issue 7 Summer Term 2021**

**Welcome!**

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you all had a very restful Easter break, it no doubt felt much needed. We continue to be grateful for the work you do supporting and advocating for our looked after children in your schools.

Here in the Virtual School we have seen some changes. Keeley has accepted a secondment to a new post within the Inclusion and Opportunity Service with a remit around early help. I, June Sewell, have been appointed Virtual School Head in her place.

Hilary Heath from the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Team has taken over as our lead adviser for the GRT Team. Suzie Winter is staying with us permanently and our Engagement Team is also remaining in place. Becca Roberts has become our SEN Lead and will be working closely with both Dave Abrahams, our co-located EHCP Coordinator and Stef Corbett our EHCP Assessment Coordinator.

We say a sad goodbye to Karen Searle who has worked for NCC for over 30 years. Her expertise around Post-16/18 employment, training and higher education will be sorely missed. Jamie Robson, who currently works as the

Norfolk LAC and Leaving Care Guidance Adviser, will be replacing Karen later in the Summer Term as our new Learning and Employment Adviser.

We hope you have been able to attend some of the CPD and conferences we have hosted and that you have found them to be useful and supportive. We continue to develop our CPD offer and I know Anna Hogg, our CPD Lead, will update you as and when plans become finalised. Check out the CPD Menu attached to this newsletter for our growing programme of digital CPD videos and Calendar of CPD. If you have any questions about CPD please contact Anna at anna.hogg@norfolk.gov.uk

I am very pleased that the Peer Support Programme will be starting soon. If you have not considered this yet I would encourage you to do so.

As a team we continue to work remotely. This will change over time but we will seek to keep those elements of remote working that have proved most useful; being able to attend a PEP in both King’s Lynn and Great Yarmouth in a morning is a good example.

We really value your feedback so please do get in touch if there are things you want to share.

June Sewell (Virtual School Head)

**Small Steps, Big Changes Conference**

Wow, Incredible, Inspirational, Passionate, Empathetic, Amazing, Awesome are all attendee’s words used to describe Kriss and the session that he led for us “Small Steps, Big Changes” on 3 February 2021. There were multiple “Thank you”s from the record breaking 205 online, drawn to hear Kriss’ positive but real outlook.

Exploring the feedback, we know that Kriss’ life story really resonated with many but has given us all much to think about as we empower the Norfolk Virtual School Community to be more like Sgt. Mackenzie, Roger Black and Derek Redmond.  Each of the steps that Kriss identified will help us to continue to challenge and change the narrative for every one of our looked after and previously looked after children. We thank Kriss for revealing himself so we can empower our young people to Dream Big.

Our Virtual School Community said:

Kriss’ talk today was powerful, insightful and truly inspiring. Heartfelt and heart-warming with realistic outlooks, truth and understanding of the life challenges for children in care.

Awe inspiring session from a sports legend, of early experiences which have challenged, driven and moulded him into adulthood success!

Thank you as always for engaging my thoughts but particularly my heart. All great schools are built on love.

Excellent thought-provoking conference - every interaction can change how children and young people feel about themselves and what they can achieve!

Kriss mesmerized me with his story today. I feel truly honoured to have been in his presence even though it was virtual. Listening to him evoked a range of emotions and gave me so much to take forward in my life and give to others.

Inspirational words from a care-leaver! Share the positives - the past is for reference, not residence.

Kriss has been kind enough to agree to record a short podcast specifically for Norfolk as a resource. We will share details of this when it is available.

**Celebration of Achievement Awards**

Nominations for this year’s Norfolk Virtual School WOW awards celebrating achievement are now being taken. Due to the current circumstances we will not be able to host a celebration of achievement event, but we still want to recognise our young people’s achievements. This year we have extended our awards to recognise our older young people. We have new awards for Post-16 and Post-18 with categories for nominations chosen by young people themselves.

Copies of the Virtual School nomination forms are now stored within the ‘Documents’ section of the young person’s online PEP. This means that they are readily available whilst discussion is taking place regarding the child or young person’s achievements during 2020 and into 2021. All you need to do is simply download, complete and return the forms.

We are looking for a **significant achievement** for the child or young person during the year which deserves recognition and reward, and we look forward to receiving nominations. Please remember that nominations should remain **confidential** and **not** be shared with the child or young person.

Please send your completed nomination forms to Jennifer Moss at virtual.schools@norfolk.gov.uk **no later than Friday 16July 2021**.

**ASK Apprenticeship virtual sessions**

At the start of the Spring Term the Virtual School used the autumn PEPs to identify young people who had said they were interested in apprenticeships. We then contacted their Social Workers and carers to confirm that the young people would be interested in coming along to an online session to find out more about apprenticeships. This was followed by a Teams invite being sent directly to the young people or their carers.

The session covered Traineeships, T-Levels and Apprenticeships and attendees were given the opportunity to ask any questions. The presenter did a great job of dispelling some of the myths around apprenticeships being an ‘easy route’ compared to other Post-16 options. We also heard from a higher-level apprentice who shared her own journey. This worked well as a way of showing young people you can still get a degree even if you don’t want to go through the ‘traditional route’.

The slides used are available from the Virtual School if you have any young people who might be interested in finding out more about apprenticeships. Norfolk County Council’s offer to our care experienced young people who are thinking about undertaking an apprenticeship can be found here: [Apprenticeships for care leavers - Norfolk County Council](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/children-in-care/care-leavers-local-offer/education-training-and-working/apprenticeships)

**Pupil Premium Plus funding**

We have updated our Pupil Premium Plus funding guidance and FAQs for the 2021-22 financial year. These will be emailed to all Designated Teachers, published in e-Courier and will also be available on our website. There will be some changes for the Summer Term, so please ensure that you read the updated guidance and FAQs and get in touch if you have any queries.

The general deadline for applications for the Summer Term is Friday 9 July 2021. As far as possible schools should request exceptional funding before putting an intervention in place as funding is never guaranteed.

For any queries regarding Pupil Premium Plus funding please contact Clare Farrant, our Pupil Premium Manager: clare.farrant@norfolk.gov.uk

**Pupil Premium WOW Awards**

We are excited to announce the launch of the first Norfolk Pupil Premium Plus WOW Awards, celebrating best practice to make a difference. Pupil Premium Plus funding underpins so much of what we do to support looked after children in education and we want to celebrate the many examples of how it is making a difference.

From the small, low cost interventions for individual pupils, to the bigger projects which support all looked after children within a setting, to specialist training for staff, we want to hear about it all!

We know that schools come up with some wonderfully creative and innovative ways of using the funding and we want to celebrate these and share them with all the settings with whom we work in partnership, in Norfolk and beyond.

The competition will run until the end of the 2021-22 academic year, with winners being announced in the Autumn Term 2022. Two schools will each win £2,500, with runners up receiving £1,000 additional Pupil Premium Plus funding, to be used for the benefit of the education of looked after children.

All case studies submitted as part of our exceptional funding agreements will automatically be entered into the competition (unless schools opt out) and all entries will be entered into a prize draw, where three additional schools will receive an award of £200.

**GRT Update**

Our GRT colleagues have recently launched the GRT website: [Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) - Schools (norfolk.gov.uk)](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.schools.norfolk.gov.uk%2Fpupil-needs%2Fgypsy-roma-traveller&data=04%7C01%7Cclare.cloves%40norfolk.gov.uk%7Cc327bc7920b248074a1b08d8e556fc66%7C1419177e57e04f0faff0fd61b549d10e%7C0%7C0%7C637511509057006557%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=MjLJzUUJDmmZRtB1H8Zoir7bjHKKoXzfX7CXNmwLBV0%3D&reserved=0) We have had a really positive response from schools, settings and some members of the GRT communities!

On the website you will find information on:

* GRT communities
* Training and resources
* Distance learning
* Support for GRT pupils in schools and settings
* Ascription and attendance
* GRT early years
* GRT news

Our GRT Advisers would be very happy to do a walk through with schools and settings at their Staff Meetings via Teams to provide further information.

Please contact hilary.heath@norfolk.gov.uk if you would like to arrange this.

**Private Fostering Guidance for Schools and other Education Settings**

Schools play an essential role in identifying privately fostered children. Although most children in private fostering situations are likely to be safe, in some private fostering arrangements there are clear safeguarding issues and children and young people effectively have no one who is concerned for their safety or welfare.

We have added guidance to our website that aims to raise the awareness of the role of education professionals in highlighting cases of private fostering and safeguarding children at risk. This should be read in conjunction with the [Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board Procedures](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.norfolklscb.org%2Fabout%2Fpolicies-procedures%2F5-13-children-living-away-from-home-including-children-and-families-living-in-temporary-accommodation%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cclare.cloves%40norfolk.gov.uk%7Cedb17a46acae4e6b8ce608d8ccdc1919%7C1419177e57e04f0faff0fd61b549d10e%7C0%7C0%7C637484595079152008%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=5jwq4sGXfw2RBulEX3m0ag23sOql%2B0xvLXWaV%2F3dAIM%3D&reserved=0) on private fostering which have been written in accordance with statutory guidance.

**Previously Looked After Funding**

The changes announced to the Pupil Premium Grant in December 2020 impact our previously looked after children, with Pupil Premium payments now being based on the October census return for payments from April 2021. If you do not believe you have received the correct amount of funding, schools can complete the following steps to check:

* Access their Budgetshare, which should give the number of previously looked after pupils for whom funding has been paid
* Access their Keystosuccess website, which should give the names of those pupils and enable you to check for specific children
* If schools think they have not received funding for pupils who were recorded as previously looked after on the October census, they need to contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) 0370 2670001; where schools believe they have incorrectly received funding they can also raise this. For queries regarding previously looked after children contact: harriet.tunnicliff@norfolk.gov.uk

**Post 16 Conference**

We finished off the Spring Term with another successful conference, this time aimed at our Post-16 colleagues. Incredible, inspiring, and amazing, are all words used by delegates to describe the session. There were multiple “Thank you”s in the chat from the 87 online, drawn to hear Sarah Naish and Rosie Jefferies speak about their experiences of working alongside Post-16 young people. It was great to hear the dual perspective of parent and young person!

Sarah and Rosie’s words really resonated with many and have given us all much to think about as we strive to be the best we can be for every young person we know. Each of the strategies that Sarah identified will help us to continue to challenge and change the narrative for every one of our looked after and previously looked after children.

**Virtual School Competitions**

Our monthly Virtual School competitions are run to inspire and create through a range of topics including Dinosaurs, Recycling, Art and Science. Each competition goes out on the 15th of every month with entries to be submitted to the Virtual School by the end of that month. Winners are based on creativity. Everyone gets a special certificate and the winning entries receive either an Arts and Crafts pack or a book. Here is an overview of our upcoming competitions for the Summer Term.

**April** – **Easter Competition:** Have fun creating your own Easter eggs and Easter bunnies. You can make an Easter basket or even an Easter bonnet. Bake your favourite Easter cookies or build your own Easter garden using recycled materials.

**May** – **Dinosaur Day:** Draw, sculpt or paint your favourite dinosaur. Tell us who it is, what it ate, when it lived and where it came from.

**June – If you were an engineer what would you do?** This is a poster competition designed to celebrate science, technology, engineering and maths. We want to encourage young people to identify a problem in the world and design a solution to it.

**July** – **Children’s Art Competition to celebrate summer:** School is out, the sun is shining, it’s warm outside. What is your favourite thing about the summer? Can you draw it, paint it or write about it? You could make a collage, a poster or write a story.

**August** – **Create your own emoji:** Emojis are a part of everyday life. We use them in texts, messages, games. Create an emoji that represents you and tell us why.

If you would like more information about our monthly competitions or enrichment activities, please contact Jennifer Moss our Education Enhancement Officer: jennifer.moss@norfolk.gov.uk

**Conquering Challenge and Change**

We are really looking forward to our next CPD event on 15 April, which is a full day for Designated Teachers, Social Workers and foster carers to deepen their understanding of transition. We will be joined by our keynote speaker Matthew Burton, from ‘Educating Yorkshire’ fame, who will explore how to effectively support young people using research and strategies based on his professional experience. After lunch there will be a Live Panel Discussion talking about “Learning to transition through life as a care experienced young person.” Delegates will then have the opportunity to watch each of the following workshops:

1. The Big Step – Year 6 to Year 7
2. Norfolk Transition Examples
3. Tackling Transition Anxiety
4. Moving on at 16

**EAL Advisory Service Update**

The EAL Advisory Service is providing training next term in:

* Teaching Advanced EAL Learners – Online via Moodle

<https://s4s.norfolk.gov.uk/Event/137626>

* EAL Interventions. What to Teach – Online via Moodle

<https://s4s.norfolk.gov.uk/Event/137621>

For more information contact raulalvarez.conte@norfolk.gov.uk

Access to the EAL Moodle is via the new EAL website:

<https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/pupil-needs/english-as-an-additional-language>

We are also running twilight EAL network sessions:

* Secondary EAL Network – 25 May 2021
* Primary EAL Network – 26 May 2021
* Early Years EAL Network – 27 May 2021

To book your place visit [www.s4s@norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.s4s@norfolk.gov.uk) or call 01603 495140

Training courses in EAL Secondary and Primary will also run virtually in the Summer Term. To express an interest in attending and be sent course details please contact tanya.ingram@norfolk.gov.uk for Secondary and lisa.reynolds@norfolk.gov.uk for Primary.

Finally, to support schools in supporting EAL families with the transition back to school we are still offering FREE use of Language Line until the end of the academic year. For details on how to use this service please contact either Tanya Ingram or Lisa Reynolds.

**Contact Us**

**E Mail:** virtual.schools@norfolk.gov.uk

**Tel:** 01603 303323

**Follow us on Twitter:** @SchoolCic

**Website:** <https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/teaching-and-learning/virtual-school-for-looked-after-children>