

Hillingdon Virtual School PEP Procedures

Before the PEP:

When a child first becomes Looked After an 'initial' PEP meeting must be held within 20 working days or within 10 working days in the case of an emergency. The PEP should feed into the first LAC Review. Thereafter, statutory guidance requires a minimum of one PEP meeting to be held per school term so that there are at least three per year. Additional PEP meetings may take place at any time if there is a need. It is good practice for PEPs for children in transitional year groups (eg. 6 and 11) to be held close to the start of a term to ensure the child has every support and intervention needed to reach their targets. Further consideration should also be given to key points in the academic year eg. when the child chooses their GCSE options or takes their mock exams when scheduling PEP meetings.

After the PEP:

The recording and dissemination of the PEP should take place without delay and this is the responsibility of the VSO in Hillingdon. The expectation is that the PEP will be written up on the eGov Digital ePEP system within 10 working days of the meeting date. Once a PEP has been audited for quality assurance (QA) by managers or the VSO has been informed it has not been selected for QA, the PEP should be shared in draft form with all professionals via secure email. Professionals should be given 7 calendar days to provide the VSO with any amendments or additions. Once the draft period has ended, the VSO should complete the final sign off process for the PEP and share the final document with all professionals. It remains the responsibility of Social Care to ensure the document is uploaded to ICS. Once a PEP has been finally signed off, it should not be altered as it stands as a record of the child's progress and achievements at that moment in time. Any subsequent updates should be added to the new PEP document for the following term.

Initiating a PEP

In Hillingdon it is the responsibility of the VSO to initiate the PEP, and this should be done in consultation with the Designated Teacher, the Social Worker and the carer. The PEP should be seen as a priority in the calendar of meetings for LAC. Even if the child does not have an educational placement, a PEP must still be produced within the statutory timeframe. In initiating the PEP, the VSO should produce an agenda in advance of the meeting so that those attending have a chance to prepare.

The VSO should request that the views of the child are ascertained, whether or not the child is attending the meeting, and request the DT gathers the additional required information for the meeting. Whilst it is expected that a DT will attend all PEP meetings, some choose to delegate this responsibility to another member of staff. This is acceptable provided this member of staff knows the child well and has enough seniority to affect change on behalf of the child, where necessary.

It may also be appropriate to invite: (list is not exhaustive)

- SENDCO
- Form tutor / Class Teacher / Head of Year
- MAPS
- LAC Nurse

- Birth parent(s)
- Supervising Social Worker
- Learning mentor / LSA / teaching assistant

However, in order to encourage the involvement of the child, it is recommended that the size of membership for the meeting is considered carefully so that the child is not made to feel intimidated or uncomfortable. Some professionals may be invited for part of the meeting, or it may be appropriate for the VSO to meet with them before or after the meeting to gain their views.

The Initial PEP

Initial PEPs will vary according to a number of factors.

If a child is remaining in the education placement they were on roll with prior to becoming LAC, the school/college will already have a good knowledge of their needs and prior achievements. They should also be in a good position to agree targets and an action plan for going forward. It is imperative at this PEP meeting that the DT is updated with the key points of the child's care plan by the Social Worker and how this may impact their education. At this meeting, the key professionals should establish an effective system of communication between them so that any concerns about the child can be communicated and dealt with without delay.

In the case that the child is attending a new school, the VSO should seek to make contact with the child's previous school to obtain all necessary data and reports and ensure these have been shared with the new school. Communication between the new DT and the previous school should also be encouraged. Again it is imperative at this PEP meeting that the DT is updated with the key points of the child's care plan by the Social Worker and how this may impact their education. An effective system of communication between professionals should again be established so that any concerns about the child can be communicated and dealt with without delay.

When a child is without an education placement, the VSO (assisted by the SW and carer) will need to bring to the meeting all relevant information and data concerning the child's previous education, as well as any reports from other professionals and their EHCP, if they have one. Based on this information, decisions should be made on the educational placement best suited to meet the child's needs, and an action plan put in place to secure such a placement, naming those who will lead in this and putting in timescales for completion.

It may be that the child has newly arrived in the country as an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC). If they speak little or no English, it is the expectation that an interpreter will be employed by the Social Worker so that as much information as possible may be gathered concerning the child's previous education. It must be remembered that lack of English does not equate to a lack of education. Some UASC may arrive in this country with very little prior education while others will have been educated to a high standard. However, all will have been without education for the time they have been travelling to the UK, which for some can be years. It is therefore vital that the VSO gets as much information as possible about the child's previous experiences of education and gets them assessed as accurately as possible, considering language barriers.

Where a child has had an initial PEP and has then begun a new school/college, the first PEP review should be held within six weeks of the child starting.

PEP Reviews

After the initial PEP, subsequent PEP meetings will review the previous PEP(s), especially the targets. A PEP review should take place once per academic term. In preparation for the meeting, all professionals should give consideration to what they have done to support the child's education since the previous PEP, particularly in relation to target achievement.

The Child's Voice

The PEP meeting is something which is done with the child, rather than to the child. The child's views, comments and preferences should be recorded by the VSO as an explicit part of the PEP document, as well as comments being woven throughout the summary where appropriate. The young person's long term and short-term aspirations regarding their education and future should also be explicitly recorded.

It is understandable that some children, particularly younger ones, do not wish to attend their PEP meetings and this can be for a variety of reasons. Whilst they should be encouraged to do so where possible, it may be more appropriate for other professionals to seek their views outside of the PEP meeting so that they can be shared and discussed. HVS has a variety of proformas which can be used by DTs to gather the views of our children.

Academic Review

Each PEP should contain a summary of the child's current attainment and progress. In order to do this, the DT should present the most current data for the child, including attainment, progress and targets. The DT should also bring to the meeting feedback from each of the child's teachers using the round robin proforma provided by the VSO prior to the meeting (see Appendices). This feedback focuses on the child's attitude to learning, motivation, effort and class and homework quality and completion. Any other plans, such as ECHPs, behaviour support plans, will also be considered during the meeting. Solution focused discussion on how the child is attaining and progressing in each area of the curriculum is central to the PEP meeting. Such discussion will take into account how the child has attained and progressed in the previous Key Stage and compare this to how they are doing currently. This discussion could be supported by the child's individual flight plan, where available.

Other areas for discussion at a PEP (list is not exhaustive):

- Attendance & punctuality to school and to lessons will be an area of focus at the PEP meeting as they are key to good educational outcomes. Many LAC have excellent attendance and punctuality and so this is an opportunity for praise. Where this is not good enough, or there are signs of slippage, discussion will need to be had on both the reasons why and the strategies which might be employed in order to make improvements, including by whom and by when.
- Transitions between Key Stages should form ongoing discussion at PEP meetings. Major changes, such as those between primary and secondary schools, should prompt discussion and preparation at the PEP meeting from about 18 months prior to the transition itself. Plans will need to be made and recorded in the PEP as to how the outgoing school will liaise with the receiving school in transferring information and how endings will be managed for the child.
- Involvement in extracurricular activities are also an area of discussion for the PEP and should take into consideration their involvement both in and outside of school. Where LAC are reluctant to participate, discussion will need to focus on understanding why and what

strategies may be employed to encourage participation in the best interests of the child and their wider development. This discussion should also encompass any upcoming trips or visits the child will attend either through their school or through HVS.

- A care plan update should be provided at every PEP meeting to ensure all professionals are aware of any changes or issues which may impact on the child's learning or education. This should include their contact plan, legal status and any upcoming planned moves, as appropriate.
- In the event that consideration for a child moving into semi-independent accommodation or a residential unit is being given, there should be open discussion on the likely impact of this on academic achievement. It is also important that in the case of the former, schools/colleges give adequate consideration to the child now having to shop, cook, clean and manage a meagre budget alone, as well as their studies.
- The usage of Pupil Premium Plus should be linked to the target setting section of the PEP (see below). PPP is available to pay for interventions that will enhance the educational outcomes of the child and may be used in a variety of ways (See Appendix 26). Use of PPP should be discussed at the PEP meeting and requests for its usage recorded in the PEP document.
- The main PEP summary should detail how much funding the school has received over the academic year and list what this has been spent on or its intended spend. The VSO should also record any expenditure on the child from centrally held PPP budgets, eg. visits to Jamie's Farm, Letterbox etc.
- The 16-19 Bursary for those who are entitled to it will need to be discussed. The VSO should ensure in the PEP meeting that arrangements for payment have been made and the uses to which it may be put.
- The views of the other professionals in attendance should be recorded as well as their support for the child's education. This could include the carer's support for homework and the Social Worker's discussions with the child about education on their last visit, for example.

Target setting and review

This is a key part of the PEP meeting. Where appropriate, LAC should be part of the target setting as they are more likely to succeed if they have a say in devising them.

Targets need to be action planned so that it is absolutely clear what the targets are, why they are needed, how they will make a difference, who will take responsibility for implementing them and how their impact will be measured within a given timescale.

Targets should be SMART as defined in statutory guidance:

S specific, significant, stretching

M measurable, meaningful, motivational

A achievable, agreed, action-oriented

R realistic, relevant, results-oriented

T time-bound, tangible, trackable

The targets should be reviewed at the next PEP meeting and each person tasked with an action will be accountable for their part in it. VSOs should also agree a mid-way review date between PEP

meetings where they will be responsible for contacting professionals linked to targets to check on progress and to ensure agreed actions have been taken.

A minimum of three targets are expected to be set at each PEP meeting (unless in exceptional circumstances) and their setting should be needs led. If less than three targets have been set, a comment should be made in the main PEP summary justifying this decision. Targets may be taken from a child's EHCP, behaviour plan or similar where it is considered appropriate.

PEPs in EYFS

Early Years PEPs will look very different to those of older children, but will share a focus on the child's individual learning and development needs and should highlight the child's current stage of development, together with the actions required to meet appropriate goals.

The PEP should cover:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development

The PEP should also comment on access to early years provision which is appropriate to the child's identified developmental needs and address how they can make a successful transition to Key Stage 1.

There is also an Early Years Pupil Premium. Use of this should be discussed at the PEP meeting and decisions made for its use.

PEPs for those who are NEET

For all children who will be 16 by 31st August, statutory school age ends on the last Friday of June of the same year. However, young people are required to stay in some form of education, employment (with training) or full-time training (EET) until they are 18. A young person between 16 and 18 who is not involved in any of these is classed as NEET.

A PEP for a young person who is NEET will look different to those of their EET peers. A NEET PEP should focus on the current barriers to the young person engaging in education or training, as well as a realistic plan for re-engaging them with it. This plan should include SMART targets which make it explicit who is going to do what, why and by when.

A NEET PEP needs to maintain a positive and aspirational focus, just like any other PEP. Efforts should be made to highlight the young person's strengths and build on their interests in order to re-engage them with education or training.

PEPs for children with significant SEN

PEPs for those children with significant SEN may be slightly different to those without. Based on their level of need it may not be possible for the child to be able to express their views or contribute directly to the meeting. If this is the case the child's views should be captured via the views and opinions of others.

The curriculum content may also vary as the schools often have a curriculum which is specific to the needs of their students. A VSO should be prepared for this, and adapt the round robins as required.

For the majority of YP with significant SEN they will be attaining below age related expectations, but this does not mean that they are not making progress from their starting point. This will need to be judged on a case by case basis.

When setting targets, where possible link these to the targets from the young persons IEP or EHCP. Many schools will have termly targets for their young people to support the EHCP target. If they have a large number of targets for the young person then the DT should be able to identify the main ones which should be included in the PEP.

Those with significant SEN will have an EHCP. This section of the PEP document must be fully completed and maintained. Any additional support should also be clearly documented along with the impact it is making on the young person's development. Where possible, one PEP per year can be carried out alongside the annual review.

Depending on the school provision, PPP may be awarded to the school. This needs to be discussed where appropriate and clearly shown within the targets on the PEP.

PEPs for children who are missing

Sadly it is not an unusual occurrence for LAC to go missing whilst they are in the care of the Local Authority. Missing periods can vary in length from case to case and this has an effect on the PEP completion process. However, regardless of their missing status, a PEP is required every term.

- Where a child has been missing for a short period(s): PEP Review meetings should be postponed until their return to ensure they can be part of proceedings.

- Where a child has been missing for a long period(s): PEP Review meetings should be postponed until their return. If a child has not returned within a few weeks of term end, efforts should be made by the VSO to meet with the other professionals in the team around the child or gather their views via other means. These should be recorded in the PEP document, as well as a review of any recent academic data and any other relevant sections which would be included in a usual PEP review.

- Where a child has been missing since becoming LAC: PEP Review meetings should be postponed until their return. If a child has not returned within a few weeks of term end, efforts should be made by the VSO to find out any relevant background information which can be recorded in the PEP document. This could be taken from the IRO's LAC Review notes, or from speaking to other professionals in the team around the child.

Where a PEP has been completed whilst a child is missing, this should be noted clearly in the PEP summary.