



Virtual School newsletter – Spring 2023

Dear Headteachers, Designated Teachers & Social Workers,

Welcome to the Spring term virtual school newsletter!

### **Staffing changes & other updates**

Firstly, thank you for all your kind words and support since I joined the Virtual School team in August. I had a fantastic first term as Headteacher of the Virtual School and enjoyed working with so many of you in this new capacity. However, my role within the local authority has now temporarily expanded and for the remainder of this academic year I am also the divisional manager for Education (0-19).

Consequently, we have needed to build leadership capacity within the virtual school and I am pleased to say that Joanne Lloyd has been appointed as the Acting Deputy Headteacher of the Virtual School. Jo will lead the virtual school on a day-to-day basis and be responsible for leading the team, but with my strategic oversight as substantive Headteacher.

As a team, we are also developing key specialisms and areas of responsibility, in order to encompass the expansion of the role of the virtual school to cover all children with a social worker. As a quick reminder the team are:

Joanne Lloyd (Acting Deputy Headteacher & EY/Primary Team Leader – SEN Specialist)

Peter McPartland (Secondary & Post 16 Team Leader – Behaviour Specialist)

Min Ling Lee-Tai (New into Care & Attendance)

Gemma Donaldson (Early Years) – Gemma returns from her maternity leave in the coming weeks

Rachael Williams (Primary & Mental Health)

Alys James (Secondary)

David Bradshaw (Post Looked-After & Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children)

Ian Wilson (Post 16 – Education & Employability Officer)

For your information, we have also established our own governing body, through the corporate parenting board. We will report to the board on our performance, development plan and areas of focus (just like any other governing board).

As we are now well into the spring term, please don't forget the deadline for all PEPS to be completed is Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023!

Fantastically, all school age children have a date scheduled for their spring term PEP meetings to take place!

However, so far this term, 39 PEP dates have been changed – the majority of which has been because the allocated social worker has requested to change the date. Please can all professionals please let us know when dates have to be changed, so that we can track this and ensure dates are prioritised by all involved?

There are still a few EY and Post 16 PEPs where a date has not been set. Please ensure that these are agreed and planned to enable all PEP documents to be submitted prior to the deadline of 3<sup>rd</sup> March to ensure Pupil Premium + payments can be processed and areas of priority can be identified.

### **Moderation plans**

We have introduced an internal PEP moderation cycle this year so we can celebrate any success that our young people have whilst also continuing to strive for high quality PEP completion. It was great to see so many PEPs that clearly had the child at the centre of it. It was evident that you all knew our cohort well! Each term, we will continue to focus on specific areas of the PEP document, this term being SMART targets. This area is an integral part of the PEP as it highlights any barriers that the young people face and evidences our Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) spending – something that the DfE regularly asks us for information on! We will be providing guidance documents for you to use in this PEP cycle (please see attached) and will then look at this in more detail later this term in preparation for the Summer PEP cycle. In the meantime, please contact your PEP Lead if you have any questions or would like to discuss specific PEP feedback.

We appreciate how much time and effort goes into our PEP documents and we would value any feedback on the document, positive or negative! The Spring DT Network meeting will focus on our document, discussing what works well, what could be improved/changed and also considering what neighbouring authorities ask for.

### **Spring Network Meeting dates:**

**We are hoping to hold our Spring DT Network meeting face to face, please can you contact one of our PEP Leads or Jo Lloyd if you are able to host, we will provide refreshments!**

EY & Primary – 15<sup>th</sup> March 3.45pm, venue tbc

Secondary & Post 16 – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 4pm, venue tbc

### Upcoming training

Following our internal moderation in the Autumn term, we have provided several supporting documents which focus on writing SMART Targets. This was one area that we feel needs to be strengthened. We will also be holding virtual training in March which will go through this in more detail. We have chosen these dates so you all have time to implement for the Summer PEP cycle.

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March at 1.30pm & 4pm. Please email [joanne.lloyd@halton.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.lloyd@halton.gov.uk) to book a place.

### Data

#### Autumn PEP completion & QA

	<u>PEP Completion</u>	<u>PEP QA</u>
<u>Early Years</u>	<u>100%</u>	Gold - 8% Green - 92% Amber - 0% Red - 0%
<u>Primary</u>	<u>100%</u>	Gold - 5.3% Green - 85.3% Amber - 9.5% Red - 0%
<u>Secondary</u>	<u>96%</u>	Gold - 9% Green - 58% Amber - 33% Red - 0%
<u>Post-16</u>	<u>79%</u>	Gold - 5% Green - 72% Amber - 14% Red - 9%

### Attendance

	<u>Overall attendance</u>	<u>Persistent absence</u>	<u>Fixed term exclusions</u>
<u>Primary</u>	<u>98%</u>	<u>7%</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Secondary</u>	<u>84%</u>	<u>28%</u>	<u>9%</u>

Thank you as ever for all you do. Please get in touch if there is ever anything we can help, advise or support with.