West Sussex Virtual School

ePEP guidance for Social Workers and Designated Teachers

September 2022

Contents

This guidance is in three parts:

Part 1 - What Makes a Good PEP,

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Glossary

Acronym	Explanation
PEP	Personal Education Plan
ePEP	Electronic Personal Education Plan
SW	Social Worker
DT	Designated Teacher
CWCF	Children We Care For
EHCP	Education and Health Care Plan
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENAT	Special Educational Needs Assessment Team
AR	Annual Review
VS	Virtual School
PP+	Pupil Premium Plus
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
EY	Early Years

Introduction to West Sussex Virtual School

The core purpose of the West Sussex Virtual School is to promote and secure improvements in the educational progress and attainment of all care-experienced children. These include West Sussex children who have been placed in educational settings in other local authorities. Many professionals are involved in the education of our children. The virtual school tracks pupils' progress and helps to co-ordinate support as if they were in a single school. The designated teachers and social workers are, therefore, an essential part of the team as we work together to achieve the best for our children.

Part 1 – What Makes a Good PEP

Purpose of the PEP

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is a statutory document that is required for all. But it is so much more than that. We know education will make a difference to their futures, and this document is the tracker by which we record and monitor each child's education. It is a record of the discussions and actions taken by professionals and corporate parents. It shows how we act to promote educational progress and help each child in our care to achieve happy and successful futures. It enables us to consider their needs and see which actions work and what else we need to do to help them fulfil their potential. It allows for regular review and tweaking of actions. It also enables us to show

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children that we believe in them and value them and through the PEP we create a detailed picture of our children's journey through education.

The Statutory Timescales

In West Sussex we hold PEP meetings for all children we care for from the age of 2 to 18 regardless of whether they are in an education setting. We know that monitoring their learning and development and being involved in the planning of appropriate learning opportunities from an early age has a positive impact on the learning experiences and attainment.

We have created this ePEP guidance to supplement the [DfE Statutory Guidance Promoting the Education of Looked After Children](#)

PEP meetings must take place within 20 days of a child coming in to care, turning 2 or starting a new education setting.

PEP Process

There are three distinct parts to the PEP process; preparation for the PEP meeting, the PEP meeting and the follow up.

The child has the right to request all PEP records once they are 18.

The SW has responsibility to set up and convene the PEP meeting, inviting the DT, the carers, the child, VS and, in some circumstances, the child's parent and/or relevant family member. If for any reason the child is not in education, the social worker should still convene the PEP meeting and a member of the VS team will take the role of the DT.

Preparing for the PEP
The DT and SW both need to read the previous PEP and gather the information that will allow them to complete their parts of the new PEP. This might mean communication with colleagues and other professionals. The SW completes section A and the DT section B. Decide between you how the child will complete their section, section C, and who will support them as needed.

Progress what must be included

See appendices for specific guidance for EY and post 16 and NEET PEPs

Section A: The SW needs to update the information sections as appropriate. For many children little, if anything, will change from term to term.

Section B: The DT has various sections depending on the age and needs of the child. All must be completed:

- **Attendance** (if applicable): A very important part of the PEP as attendance can be a real issue among children we care for nationally. Please make sure you enter sessions where asked for, not percentages.
- **Part time timetables and alternative provision** (if applicable): Part time timetables can be a useful fixed-time strategy to get the child back to full time education. However, they are not a

permanent solution and are an exception rather than a rule. If these are used, you must record the purpose and how you are going to support the child to return to full time education.

- **Exclusions**: We do not permanently exclude children we care for, but we do recognise that their behaviours can be challenging. Any use of fixed-term exclusion and internal exclusion must be logged here. Please make sure you discuss issues with your VS link so we can support you with strategies and signpost colleagues and resources as appropriate.
- **Previous education settings**: This won't need editing every term.
- **Progress**: This essential element allows the VS to celebrate and monitor the individual child's educational journey.
- **SEN without EHCP**: This section will provide an overview of the child's SEN
- **SEN with EHCP section**: This section will generally stay the same but will need updating with the new date for the AR each year. Annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans must, from year 9 at the latest, include a focus on adulthood, including employment (para 54 of the Careers Guidance and access for education and training providers statutory guidance). While the PEP must be conducted separately from the annual review, the same information will be useful

Section C (EYFS and Post 16) Section D (Primary, Secondary and SEN): This enables the child/ parent/carer to capture their views about education.

Holding the PEP Meeting

The SW, as the 'corporate parent' is responsible for initiating the PEP meeting. The PEP itself is a co-produced document. It is important that before the meeting, the SW and DT decide who will chair and who will type into the PEP. The decision about how this will work must be agreed prior to the meeting, and not in front of the child or carers. Indecision at this point can undermine the trust and sense of purpose of the meeting.

Please choose the most appropriate method for the meeting and have a facility for those who wish to dial in virtually and make sure that the technology is tested so time isn't wasted. Whoever chairs the meeting should set out the protocol for speaking and make sure everyone is introduced at the start.

SMART Targets

The conversation needs to include a review and evaluation of the previously set targets. New PEP targets need to be agreed during each PEP meeting. They need to be SMART.

The DfE defines this as:

- **Specific, significant, stretching -** Drill right into what needs to happen to help move the child/young person towards their goals. It's not 'meet your target grade', it's what needs to be achieved to help them meet their target grade.
- **Measurable, meaningful, motivational -** You'll be reviewing the impact of this target next term, so agree it in a way that everyone can see if it has been met or not. More importantly, write it in a way where you can all see if it's made the intended difference or not.
- **Achievable, agreed, action-orientated -** You'll have some long-term targets that will carry over, but most targets are likely to be short-term, so think about what can be achieved in the term between this and the next PEP. Keeping focused on actions will help to make it clear who needs to do what.
- **Relevant, realistic, result-orientated -** Make sure the child/young person understands and agrees the need for the target and can see how it will contribute to their progress towards their ambition.

- **Time bound -** You can set long-term and short-term targets but will probably have more short-term ones. Make sure the intended timescales are clear.

Examples of how SMART targets might be worded are in Part 2 of this document

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding (available for school age children and discretionary for post 16)

If PP+ funding is required to achieve a target, you need to apply for it via the ePEP. As you add the SMART target there are drop-down menus and a comments section for you to do this. Please see the technical support part of this document for full guidance. Funding for school age and post 16 can be requested at any point during the school year, it does not have to be at the PEP meeting. This must be requested by submitting a SMART target.

Following the PEP Meeting
The SW and the DT need to check and sign-off their parts before the Virtual School can read through the PEP and complete the required quality assurance steps. They will grade it good or requires improvement to be good. If needed, they will contact the DT or SW to strengthen or add more detail to elements. If the Virtual School has ongoing concerns, they will share these with the DT/SW or the HT/line manager as appropriate.

Please see appendices at the end of this document for specific guidance on completion expectations for the specific phases.

The role of the Virtual School in quality assuring PEPs
If you have questions about the PEP, please do contact one of our PEP champions. They can provide support and training on the ePEP system

The Virtual School's role is to ensure the best quality educational provision and support for the children in our care and quality assure all PEPs in order to provide feedback.
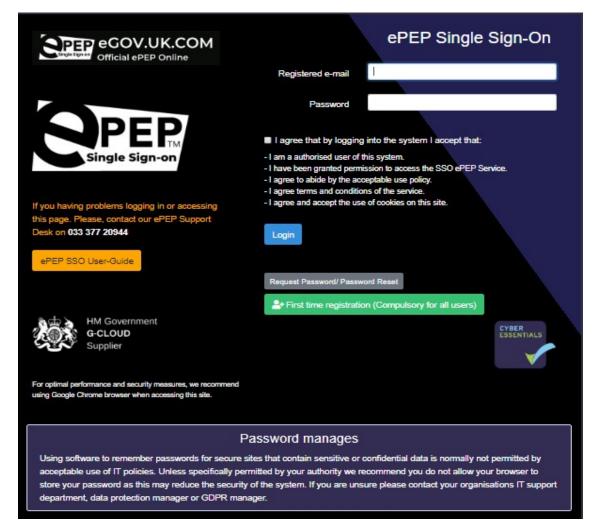
The Virtual School may also attend a range of PEPs – this is determined by the needs of the child. They might attend in person or dial in. If, during your preparation for a PEP, you think it would be useful for your Virtual School link to attend, please get in touch with them as soon as possible. This might be because you have worries about the child's progress or because there is success you know the child would like to share with the Virtual School.

Part 2 – ePEP – the Technical Bit

Log into epeponline. That will take you to the login screen:

Select the 'West Sussex County Council' blue bar:

Select the child and scroll down to the page where you will see 'Current Formal PEPs' and 'Completed PEPs'. Click on the 'PEP' button for the relevant PEP you want to see.

The PEP is divided into various sections. Click on the section to take you to the page you want to read or complete.

Progress and Attainment

Early Years - please complete the current terms information only. Based on your most recent observations of the child and knowledge of their development please state whether in your professional opinion the child is working at an age expected stage of development and making expected progress. In line with the new Assessment requirements in the EYFS we no longer ask you to pinpoint a child's stage of development unless they are presenting with a delay. Please provide evidence to support your judgements in whatever format your setting uses to monitor and share progress.

Special Educational Needs - to add data in this page, click 'Add an Entry' on the top right of the progress report (you might need to scroll across the page). Select the subject and qualification type and enter the data. If the curriculum area or qualification type is not listed, please select other and type in your own.

Repeat this for all the subjects/areas of study this child is following. Remember to press 'save' (found at the bottom) after adding each entry!

Primary & Secondary - to add data in this page, click 'Add an Entry' on the top right of the progress report (you might need to scroll across the page). Select the subject and qualification type and enter the progress & attainment data. If the curriculum area or qualification type is not listed, please select other and type in your own.

Repeat this for all the subjects/areas of study this child is following. Remember to press 'save' (found at the bottom) after adding each entry!

Post 16 / NEET - to add data in this page, click 'Add an Entry' on the top right of the progress report (you might need to scroll across the page). Select the subject and qualification type and enter the data. Please enter the target grade you would expect the child/young person to be on at the end of the year.

Repeat this for all the subjects/areas of study this child/young person is following. Remember to press 'save' (found at the bottom) after adding each entry!

SMART TARGETS and PP+ Funding

Targets - Remember that targets need to be SMART. They will typically be written to show how the professionals and carers are going to support the child to make progress. They are not just a list of aspirations or jobs for the child (e.g. 'Reach your target grade in reading' or 'stop arguing with peers').

All targets need to be supported by actions from professionals. Please record the individual actions required to allow our children to succeed.

Examples of SMART targets can be found on pages 9 and 10 below.

Funding (Primary and Secondary aged children) - Use the ePEP 'SMART targets' page to apply for PP+ funding to support targeted actions. When you add each SMART target, you can click on funding, select the appropriate 'source of funding' then 'save'. When all the information has been added you will need to click the 'submit funding request' button. This request will then go to the VS for consideration. **Please note that funding for post 16 is discretionary.**

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Funding is not guaranteed and is decided at panel. Please note that the Virtual School does not pay for any provision detailed in a child's EHCP or that would be provided at no cost to any other child. Due to the highly mobile nature of our cohort, funding is only provided on a termly basis and is dependent on the child remaining on roll. All monies must be accounted for and the impact of the spend detailed in the PEP. This table shows which funding applications will be considered or accepted.

Application Request	Panel Consideration
1:1 Tuition (core subjects – see earlier guidance)	Will be considered
1:1 Teaching Assistant Support (up to £5000 per term)	Will be considered
Specialist training to support looked after learners	Will be considered
Alternative provision as a means of reducing the risk of exclusion – costs split with school as appropriate	Will be considered
Specialist interventions to support learning and engagement (not therapy)	Will be considered
Extra-curricular activities over and above those covered by the foster carers allowance. E.g. specialist music lessons	Will be considered
A laptop and relevant software, including web-safety	May be approved - under the discretion of the Virtual School Management
Residential trips (contribution to remaining cost after foster carer contribution is agreed)	May be approved - under the discretion of the Virtual School Management
Educational psychology interventions or assessments	May be approved - under the discretion of the Virtual School Management
1:1 tuition in any other subjects	May be approved - under the discretion of the Virtual School Management
Books to encourage reading or to build on the work done in the classroom including revision guides	May be approved - under the discretion of the Virtual School Management
Extracurricular activities which are funded through the Foster Carer allowance e.g. cubs, scouts, girl guides, youth club, theatre club, football club etc.	May be approved - under the discretion of the Virtual School Management
Transport Costs	Will not be considered
School Uniform	Will not be considered
School Equipment	Will not be considered
1:1 Teaching Assistant used by the whole class	Will not be considered
School trips which are funded through the Foster Care allowance	Will not be considered
Therapy e.g., Art Therapy, Play Therapy, Psychotherapy (all these need to go through Children's Services or SENAT to ensure the right person is appointed and the intervention is monitored through the Care Plan or EHCP	Will not be considered
School interventions that could be accessed anyway e.g. homework club, revision classes	Will not be considered
Provision that should be covered by an Education, Health and Care Plan	Will not be considered

PEP Sign Off

Once your section and the PEP meeting is concluded you need to sign off your section. The sign-off pages are at the bottom of each section – just click 'mark completed'.

PEP Sign Off	
Social Worker has not yet completed PEP	Mark completed
Next meeting date	
Next meeting time	
	E.g: HH:MM
Designated Teacher has not yet completed PEP	Mark completed
Young Person has not yet completed PEP	Mark completed

Examples of SMART Targets

1) **For X to listen to and consider another child's idea at least once during each group activity - Actions:**
   - TA to run small social skills group where they model, role play and provide supported opportunities to practise listening to and considering another person's idea
   - Child to attend Lego Therapy group
   - Adult available to support child's group during group activities, to remind, prompt and commentate on what's happening when different group members give their ideas.

2) **For X to separate from carer within 10 mins in the mornings - Actions:**
   - Teacher to greet carer, then child at the door of the classroom each day
   - Child to have a 'job' to do on arrival at school each day, which teacher reminds them about when greeting
   - Carer to have short 'goodbye' ritual with child including leaving them with a reminder of them for the day (e.g. heart drawn on wrist) and reminding them they will be there to pick them up at the end of the day.

3) **For X to be able to name 5 facial expressions (happy, sad, worried, safe and kind) and understand their meaning - Actions:**
   - Create 2 sets of emotion cards one for home and one for school
   - Cards used to support discussions around emotions
   - Adults to model and narrate emotions throughout the day
   - X to join social skills group 2 x 20 minutes per week.

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4) **To increase the amount of exercise in order for X to be more active and run for 30 mins without stopping -** Actions:
   - Create activity sheet / timetable with X
   - Display visual timetable on the wall
   - Foster carer to support X with joining a sports club.

5) **For X to complete 100% homework tasks in English -** Actions:
   - Write homework task in planner after every lesson
   - Class TA to check planner every lesson
   - Foster Carer to check & sign planner every night
   - Form tutor to check & sign planner every Friday
   - Speak to English Teacher if problems.

6) **For X To secure a post 16 college course - Actions:**
   - Arrange a careers interview with school careers staff
   - Research college courses/website
   - Attend college open day
   - Submit application for college course
   - Form tutor to review at half term progress
   - Foster Carers to support college visit.

7) **For X to spell 100 of the year 3/4 words - Actions:**
   - Identify what kind of strategies the YP employs to spell
   - Organise designated ten minute 1:1 support for this work on a daily basis
   - Consider use of Clicker etc
   - Enlist support of Carer in supporting the approach being undertaken.

8) **Fox X to use 3 new PECS symbols to communicate needs consistently for toilet, thirsty and hungry - Actions:**
   - School to print and laminate PECS cards for toilet, thirsty and hungry
   - School to ensure that the PECS cards are available in all of x's work areas so that x always has access to them
   - School to provide a set of PECS cards to foster carers so that x always has access to them when at home
   - School staff and foster carers to model using the PECS cards
   - Weekly catch up between school and home to share how x is getting on.

9) **Fox X to read by sight 20 of the 45 reception high frequency words - Actions:**
   - X to have 1:1 precision teaching for 10 minutes 4 x per week
   - Teaching assistant to print and laminate 2 x sets of the 20 words to send home for foster carer
   - Foster carer to display 1 set of words on the fridge
   - Foster carer to practise reading the words at home for 10 minutes 2 x per week and play games such as – word match, placing words around the room and X must run to the correct word when she hears it.

ePEP Quality Assurance

All e PEPs must be completed in order to be signed-off by WSVS (West Sussex Virtual School). Where PEPs are incomplete, professionals will be informed and asked to complete them. Signed-off PEPs will be categorised as 'good' or 'requires improvement to be good'.

Please see appendices for specific guidance of completion expectations for the different phases.

RAG Rating 'Progress' Judgements

Children we Care for, need to be supported to make accelerated progress, to narrow, and eventually close the gap in attainment. Progress on entry to care can be compromised due to circumstances, such as the trauma of coming into care and historical poor attendance.

For children new into care, the initial PEP will not contain progress data. However, attainment data for the initial PEP would be helpful. For all subsequent PEPs, we are measuring the progress the child has made since the last PEP which should be approximately a term. Due to the timing of the PEP cycle, progress may need to be a teacher assessed judgement rather than based on end of term summative assessment.

For progress to be judged overall as exceptional, in purple, it is significantly above expected progress or better than progress for non CLA peers.

For progress to be judged overall as outstanding, in blue, it is above expected progress for non CLA peers.

For progress to be judged overall as good, in green, it is at expected rate or slightly better than non CLA peers.

For progress to be judged overall as 'requires improvement to be good', in amber, it is slightly below progress of non CLA peers.

For progress to be judged overall as inadequate, in red, it is below or well below progress of non CLA peers.

Part 3 – Appendix

Appendices 1 – Early Years

The SW and the DT need to check and sign-off their parts before the AHT from the Virtual School can read through the PEP and complete the required quality assurance steps.

A '**Good PEP'** has:

- Attainment and progress judgements and supporting evidence attached
- Attendance information recorded
- Evidence of transition planning for those children joining an EY setting, moving room or setting or starting School
- The Childs views recorded or attached
- The Parent/carers' views completed
- Evidence of how previous targets and interventions have made a difference to the child/young person
- SMART targets set to improve the child/young person's educational achievement and experience
- A SMART target that indicates the carers' role in supporting the child's educational achievement.
- Costing against target if EYPP is required in schools
- Evidence of the impact of previous EYPP spending
- The PEP meeting – All sections of the discussion mapping and recording including scaling need to be completed. This section should be completed in detail and enable the reader to get a clear picture of the child.

A '**Requires Improvement'** PEP - there is evidence that a PEP has taken place however there is either information missing and/ or the level of information recorded does not meet the criteria for good. A PEP will not be signed off as Requires Improvement without the DT or SW being given the opportunity to improve it. The comments made by the VS team on the PEP at sign off will reflect why the PEP does not meet the criteria for being good.

An '**Inadequate'** PEP – there is no evidence that a PEP meeting has taken place.

Appendices 2 – Primary, Secondary and Special Educational Needs

The SW and the DT need to check and sign-off their parts before the AHT from the Virtual School can read through the PEP and complete the required quality assurance steps.

A **'Good' PEP** has all mandatory fields completed fully, these are:

- Attendance information
- Confirmation of FT or PT timetable. If PT, the details are completed, including end date
- SEN Page

- Health, Emotional wellbeing and SDQ result (if you do not have an SDQ score please complete all other parts)
- Child's views recorded in one of the following ways:
  - Directly into section C
  - Into section C via interactive child's module
  - Into section via SEN PECS module
  - Uploaded documents providing child's views
  - A clear statement that the child does not wish to share their views – this can be recorded in section C or D
- Parent/Carers View
- 14-19 careers page completed for all young people aged 14 and over
- Progress data recorded for a range of subject areas as appropriate for the child (see above)
- At least 2 SMART targets set to improve the child's educational achievement
- SMART targets to improve the child's educational experience which could include enrichment activities
- A SMART target that indicates the carers' role in supporting the child's educational achievement
- If an attendance target is required, this is also set
- Costing against target If PP+ is required
- Evidence of how previous targets and interventions have made a difference to the child/young person
- The PEP meeting – All sections of the discussion mapping and recording including scaling need to be completed. This section should be completed in detail and enable the reader to get a clear picture of how the child is getting on
- Evidence of transition planning for moving to, Year 7 and Year 12 or to new educational provision
- Post-16 plans for Year 11 pupils recorded in spring and summer PEPs.

A **'Requires Improvement'** PEP - there is evidence that a PEP has taken place however there is either information missing and/ or the level of information recorded does not meet the criteria for good. A PEP will not be signed off as Requires Improvement without the DT or SW being given the opportunity to improve it. The comments made by the VS team on the PEP at sign off will reflect why the PEP does not meet the criteria for being good.

An '**Inadequate'** PEP – there is no evidence that a PEP meeting has taken place.

Appendices 3 – Post 16/NEET

The SW and the DT need to check and sign-off their parts before the AHT from the Virtual School can read through the PEP and complete the required quality assurance steps.

A **'Good' PEP** has all mandatory fields completed fully, these are:

- Attainment and progress judgements recorded for all subjects
- Emotional Health & Well Being section
- Clear evidence that the Young Person's views are recorded in the appropriate sections. If the young person does not wish to share their views this needs to be clearly recorded in section C
- The Parent/carers' views completed & a target agreed

- Evidence of transition planning to Care leaving Service or new education setting
- Evidence of previous targets and how interventions have made a difference to the young person
- At least 2 SMART targets set to focus on improving educational achievement and enrichment
- Evidence of the review of the previous targets
- Costings against target if PP+ is required
- The PEP meeting – All sections of the discussion mapping and recording including scaling need to be completed. This section should be completed in detail and enable the reader to get a clear picture of the child.

A **'Requires Improvement'** PEP - there is evidence that a PEP has taken place however there is either information missing and/ or the level of information recorded does not meet the criteria for good. A PEP will not be signed off as Requires Improvement without the DT or SW being given the opportunity to improve it. The comments made by the VS team on the PEP at sign off will reflect why the PEP does not meet the criteria for being good.

An **'Inadequate'** PEP – there is no evidence that a PEP meeting has taken place.