

Suffolk Virtual School Newsletter

Spring 2025

Happy New Year! We hope you have had a restful festive break. It's hard to believe that we are already more than a third into this academic year and this term will be, we're sure, equally busy!

We are looking forward to working with you again this term – and welcome new colleagues.

This term's newsletter will cover:

- Autumn term ePEP quality assurance
- What to do if there has been a change of DT at your setting
- Children in care with SEND
- Professional development opportunities for DTs, DSLs and colleagues who work with children in care, previously looked after children or children with a social worker (including a post-graduate qualification from the University of Buckinghamshire)

Autumn term ePEP quality assurance

Thank you very much for submitting the ePEPs for your Suffolk children last term. We have really enjoyed reading about their experiences and the difference that the support you have put in place is making to their outcomes. Pupil voice continues to be a strength in the ePEP document, and it is great to read how schools and settings are using the child's wishes and feelings to inform their plan. We hope the amendments to the ePEP template have made the document even more accessible.

The evaluation page of our ePEP has also been updated with a view of making our feedback clearer. To access the evaluation page, you need to go into each pupil's Document section, select the most recently quality assured ePEP and scroll to the second to last page.

Just a couple of reminders:

- For Suffolk children in care there should be a PEP meeting each term. However, the live ePEP document should be completed outside of this meeting as the term progresses. Our expectation is that the ePEP is started at the beginning of each term and updated throughout the term. This term's submission date is 21 March. Schools and settings don't need to wait until the PEP meeting to complete the ePEP as targets, pupil voice, support/interventions and observations in the Live Records can be recorded from the start of the term
- Please remember to record actions and decisions that are agreed in other meetings or via other forms of communication such as emails and phone calls in the Pupil Voice and Planning tab. These help us to see how the plan for the child for the term has been put together. You can select the meeting type from the dropdown, as shown below:

Actions and decisions agreed outside of formal meetings (i.e. v	12-11-2024
CiC Review	
EHCP Annual Review	
Initial PEP meeting (for pupils new to school or new to care)	
Meetings with external providers or services	
Meeting with parent/carer	
Parents Evening	
PEP meeting (with pupil present)	
PEP meeting (with pupil not present)	
Professionals' meeting	
SEND planning meeting	
Target setting meeting	
Transition Planning Meeting	
1 : 1 Pupil Voice	
Actions and decisions agreed outside of formal meetings (i.e. phone calls/emails)	

- We would ask that a Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire is completed by their school or setting on an annual basis for each Suffolk child in care. Please check the date of the most recent school based SDQ score on the ePEP and complete a new one if it is more than a year old or there have been some notable changes to the child's personal development.

What to do if there has been a change of DT at your setting

We are aware that there will have been some changes to DTs this term. We have been informed already about a number of these, and we will be in touch with these colleagues to welcome you to the virtual school and to provide an induction session.

If the DT has changed at your school or setting and we are not aware, please do let us know as soon as possible so that we can support you to get up and running with the role (if you are new to the role) and with Welfare Call, the online ePEP system that we use for our school age children.

Please email any changes to suffolkvirtualschool@suffolk.gov.uk

We look forward to working with you!

Children in care with SEND

Thank you so much for ensuring that our children in care with EHCPs in Years 6 and Years 11, had Annual Reviews during the autumn term. Please do get in touch if any support is needed regarding next steps planning for phase transfers.

If you are applying to Suffolk SEND for High Needs Funding (HNF) please see link below for deadlines:

[High Needs Funding – Suffolk Learning](#)

For Suffolk schools, we also encourage you to refer children to our Specialist Education Services, as you would for any other child:

[Specialist Education Services – Suffolk Learning](#)

For all our schools (whether in Suffolk or other LAs), we also offer funded:

[Analysis of Additional Needs Tool - Suffolk County Council](#)

Simply contact us to discuss further and we can initiate the referral.

And finally, if you're in the process of collating a request to assess for an EHCP, again please do contact us, and we can contribute towards the evidence; we would also always advise you to include the child's most recent ePEP Document in the submission.

Professional development opportunities for DTs, DSLs and colleagues who work with children in care, previously looked after children or children with a social worker

Attendance to the DT sessions last term was impressive and we hope that you continue to find each session useful to support your role(s).

We appreciate that you may not be able to attend each session, so we will be uploading the slides for each DT session to the Document section for each Suffolk pupil on Welfare Call. The slides for each session from the autumn term have already been uploaded for you to access.

If you are a DT whose school does not currently have Suffolk CiC on roll and wish to access the slides, please contact our office suffolkvirtualschool@suffolk.gov.uk to request a copy.

The details of the sessions this term are as follows:

An introduction to DESTY GOALS (Key Stage 2-3) ***Presented by Stephanie Fitzgerald, DESTY founder.***

- Tuesday 21 January 10 -10.45 am
- Tuesday 21 January 3.45 - 4.30 pm

Working Memory and Executive Function

Presented by Olivia Blick, Educational Psychologist.

- Tuesday 4 February 10 -10.45 am
- Tuesday 4 February 3.45 - 4.30 pm

Spring term ePEP check-in

Presented by members of the Suffolk Virtual School team

- Tuesday 25 February 10 -10.45 am
- Tuesday 25 February 3.45 - 4.30 pm

The role of carers in supporting the education of children in care

Presented by Sam Brown, Suffolk Fostering Association Chair.

- Monday 3 March 10 -10.45 am
- Monday 3 March 3.45 - 4.30 pm

Please complete this booking form to reserve a place: [Spring 2025 booking form](#)

Our professional development offer also includes access to online learning modules, produced by Anspear Publishing, which now offer the chance to gain CPD certificates from the University of Buckingham. These modules cover a range of topics that are relevant to those working with disadvantaged children in particular and can be accessed via the QR code on the flier attached to this email. A significant number of DTs have already signed up and completed modules, and they have been specifically designed to be accessible, with the option to pick up where you left off. Each module in total should take approximately an hour and a half, with a printable certificate available upon completion.

To gain the CPD certificates, there are set pathways of four/five modules that are required to be completed. These are stated on the flier. All modules are free of cost to schools.