



Derby City Council

Corporate Parenting Board  
22 September 2015

**ITEM 5**

Report of the Acting Strategic Director for  
Children and Young People

## **Report on Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for Looked After Children**

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Coming in new to the team to add some management capacity, due to the long term absence of the virtual school headteacher, it was apparent that there have been concerns for some time over the PEP process and completion rates (appendix 2). (and more generally over the role, remit and function of the virtual school team)
- 1.2 Having looked at the practice, systems and processes, this report identifies areas that required improvement.
- 1.3 A series of actions have been initiated to address the areas which require improvement; these are outlined in this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To note the concerns and agree the appropriateness of the actions taken to date
- 2.2 To recommend through the upcoming IT procurement that a specific Looked After Child module is integrated within what is procured

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The actions taken will ensure the PEP systems and processes are more efficient, increase accountability and increase the % completion and quality of PEPs
- 3.2 The procurement on a Looked After Children module will ensure the data source we have as an LA is more robust

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**4.1 Issues identified with regard to PEPs**

- Lack of ownership – who's document is it? schools / social workers / virtual schools / young persons?
- Lack of value and purpose of the document – what is the point and impact of the PEP beyond being a statutory document?
- Lack of co-ordination between different "support" plans around certain young people – multiple targets and areas for development – LAC Review, IEP, behaviour support plans, PEP targets, school targets
- Too many places where the process can fall down/fail
- Different departmental areas involved but if something goes wrong there is little accountability - business support, social workers, IROs, schools, virtual school team and information management
- PEP form was not fit for purpose – too long and irrelevant sections, three different forms sent out
- No review of previous targets in the PEP process
- Little QA of the PEPs that were returned
- In an ideal world the LAC review and PEP meeting should work in sync but in reality the timings rarely coincide

**4.2 PEPs and Pupil Premium Plus funding**

- No PP+ policy
- PP+ was distributed with no regard to the completion or quality of the PEP (this being partly due to staff absence and having to distribute the money or give it back to DfE)
- No clear linkage between PP+ funding and targets in the PEPs

**4.3 Cross Departmental working**

- Disconnect in terms of cross departmental communication, working and understanding of structures and accountabilities
- Lack of internal communication - Virtual school team not being told when a LAC is moved school in a systematic way
- Disconnect in terms of data. Virtual school is reliant on information which is held and owned by others. Issues with access to data – confidential records. Two systems – lack of confidence that the data from CCM/Liquid Logic is accurate/has been updated. Education is working with a set of spreadsheets which constantly need updating – this is inefficient and leads to inaccuracy reliant on what is passed over. Need for a single management information solution which links social care and educational data.

- 4.4 In light of the issues and areas for improvement around the PEP and the associated processes the following actions have been taken:

**Strengthening the PEP system**

- In the summer term action has been taken to provide a short term fix before moving towards an ePEP in September. This action has been to amalgamate three separate documents – PEP, education provision map and bank details. This will ensure that all the relevant documents are returned. The QA process and systematic monitoring has improved the quality of the “weak” PEPs by asking them to be amended and resubmitted – see below.
- We have commissioned a trial of an e-PEP from a company called Welfare Call. Through the training, outlined below, this will further be developed after feedback from users. The ePEP allows us to schedule the PEPs, send out timely reminders, allocate responsibility for completion of certain pages to specific people and monitor who is meeting the set deadlines. The PEPs will be held on the servers of Welfare Call but can be downloaded as a word document and saved in Liquid Logic as required.

4.5 **How the pupil voice has been captured throughout**

- Work has been done with the young person’s officer to ensure that the voice of the young person is integrated throughout the new ePEP template. Pupil voice questions are at the top of each section as appropriate. A consultation exercise has been undertaken with pupils across the age range to ensure the questions asked are appropriate.

4.6 **Timeline for the implementation of the new e-PEPs**

- Full implementation is scheduled for September 2015; early adopters will trial the new system in July 2015

4.7 **The training schedule and who will attend**

- 3 dates have been set for training on the new ePEP – these dates are the 10<sup>th</sup> June, 29<sup>th</sup> June and the 9<sup>th</sup> July. There is an additional date which will be arranged in September.
- Each training session will last 90 minutes; for the set dates there are spaces for up to 130 staff to be trained
- Staff who have been invited to attend are designated teachers, child and fostering social workers, case support officers, IROs and residential care workers
- The training will be led by staff from Welfare Call
- A “user guide” for the ePEP has been produced and a telephone helpline will also be available

#### **4.8 PEP Quality Assurance**

- Since March every PEP which has been completed and returned to the Virtual School has been quality assured; a standard proforma has been established which identifies what is required within a quality PEP; and agreed actions are recorded if a PEP does not reach the standard we would expect. The process for addressing “weak” PEPs is typically:
  - development points are emailed to the DT asking for the points to be addressed and resubmitted. This happens immediately after the weekly QA meeting
  - If the development points are not addressed a more formal letter is written to the DT copying in the Headteacher
  - If there is a recurring issue with PEPs submitted from a school a member of the virtual school will arrange to visit the school to have a meeting
- As we move towards the ePEP the intention will be to produce an exemplar to help staff understand what is required.
- The ePEP which we have developed has the functionality to allow the virtual school team to “sign off” PEPs as having met the QA standard

#### **4.9 Linking PEPs to PP+**

- The Pupil Premium Plus Policy has been written and clearly links the submission of quality PEPs containing SMART costed targets to the allocation of PP+ funding. The policy is a “child’s needs driven approach” to funding
- A bank of example SMART targets are being built up as this is an area which has been highlighted as a weakness in the QA process

#### **4.10 Capturing positive activities in the ePEP**

- Within the ePEP there is a section which records achievements. This can be reported on.

#### **4.11 Better tracking of attendance, attainment and progress statistics**

- This has been an area where considerable resource has gone into chasing individual schools, or working through each PEP to obtain the attendance, attainment and progress data. This has not been an efficient use of resource and has been a source of frustration for the virtual school team.
- As a result of the inefficiencies of the systems which were being used Welfare Call has been commissioned to trial collecting attendance, attainment and progress data. Attendance data is collected on a daily basis (in some cases weekly) while attainment and progress is collected on a half termly basis. The attendance data has been backed dated to September 2014 (appendix 3) while the attainment and progress data began to get collected in June 2015.

#### **4.12 The Letterbox Club**

- A programme managed by Booktrust that was initiated at the University of Leicester, which aims to provide enjoyable educational support for looked-after children aged 5-13. Children receive a variety of books, number games and stationery items to use and keep for themselves. The Letterbox Club focuses on improving their educational outlook by sending, directly to their home address, a parcel of carefully selected items for them to use and keep. The parcels contain a variety of books (fiction and non-fiction), number games and fun educational materials aimed at stimulating reading and educational activity in the home.
- Letters have gone to Headteachers/DT and foster carers explaining about Letterbox Club.
- Copied both letter to the child's social worker
- Foster carers and Social Workers have been asked them to feedback to me, at any point during the project, if the young people think the books are too easy/hard, if the young person moves on, to notify that they have and to let me know if for any reason they do not like the books and want to stop receiving the parcels.
- Each child's levels were looked at to ascertain which parcel the child receives. The SEN Parcel was very young, so where the child was a year or so behind, we have sent a slightly younger parcel and saved the SEN parcels for the younger children.
- First parcel due to out to child's home w/c 27 April.

#### **4.13 Information, Advice and Guidance for LAC**

- Clara Morley (CM) is the lead PA in Connexions who has the responsibility for IAG and progression of LAC. Each LAC in Y11 is seen by either Clara or a locality based MAT PA to discuss their progression and career plans. There is a section in both the old PEP and new ePEP to record what these plans are. When a LAC moves into post 16 provision CM is responsible for supporting the LAC and tracking their participation. Generally if a LAC has been in long term foster care their progression is sustained and positive. The issue in sustaining participation is where the LAC has been in residential care and/or attending the PRU. The pen portraits of those LAC who are currently NEET are outlined in appendix 4
- The data from March 2015 shows that of the 40 LAC in Derby; 31 are EET; 7 NEET; and 2 unknown.
- The destinations of LAC out of area need to be collected in a more systematic way. This should be done through the specific page on the new ePEP as we move forward.

#### **4.15 Other issues to note**

- Pearson online learning materials have been purchased which look to assist pupils with English, maths, progression information and life as a looked after child. The impact and usage of these resources will be monitored in 2015/16
- Kip McGrath online tutoring trial – we are exploring with schools whether online tutoring would have an impact on the achievement of LAC. This will in the first instance be a free trial involving a baseline assessment followed by 2 online lessons.

<b>OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED</b>
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- 5.1 Discussions were had with colleagues implementing liquid logic and the transformation team with regard to other possible ePEP systems but neither of these routes would have provided a timely or cost effective alternative

**This report has been approved by the following officers:**

<b>Legal officer</b> <b>Financial officer</b> <b>Human Resources officer</b> <b>Service Director(s)</b> <b>Other(s)</b>	Ian Peel – Director Learning and Skills
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<b>For more information contact:</b> <b>Background papers:</b> <b>List of appendices:</b>	Graeme Ferguson 07812301044 <a href="mailto:graeme.ferguson@derby.gov.uk">graeme.ferguson@derby.gov.uk</a> None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – PEP completion rate Appendix 3 – LAC Attendance and exclusions Appendix 4 – LAC NEET pen portraits
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<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial and Value for Money**

- 1.1 Procurement procedures have been followed and will be used to further procure services in the future

**Legal**

- 2.1 None

**Personnel**

- 3.1 None

**Equalities Impact**

- 4.1 None

**Health and Safety**

- 5.1 None

**Environmental Sustainability**

- 6.1 None

**Asset Management**

- 7.1 None

**Risk Management**

- 8.1 None

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 9.1 Fits within the corporate priority - an **ambitious** and forward looking city with good prospects for everyone

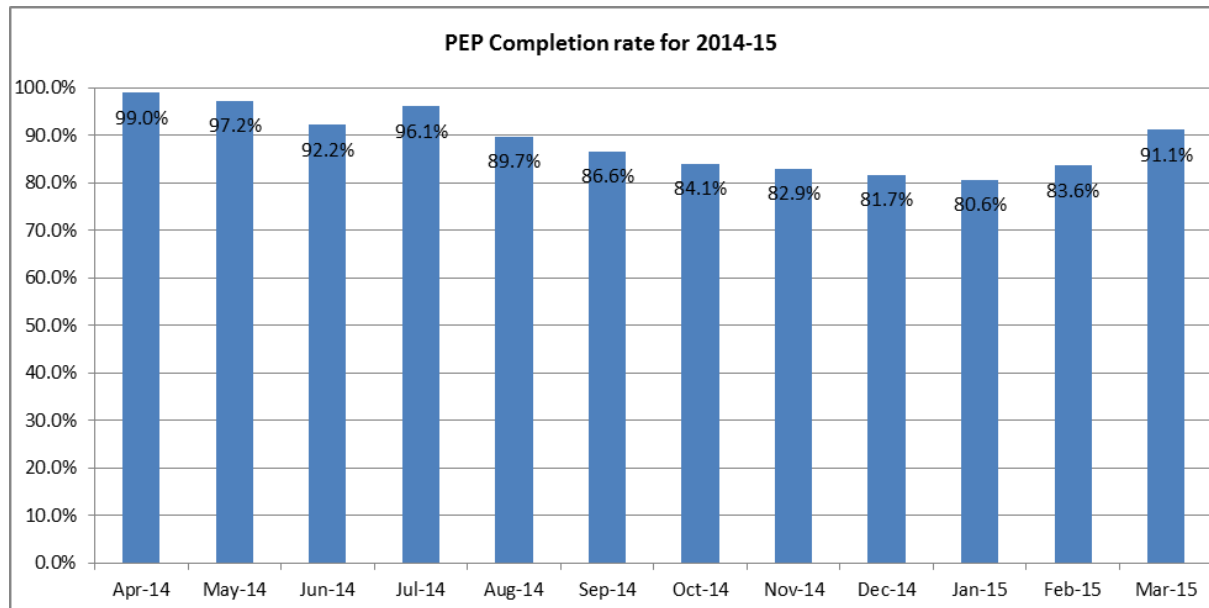


## Appendix 2

### Graph of PEP % completion over the last 12 months

#### PEP Completion rate for 2014-15

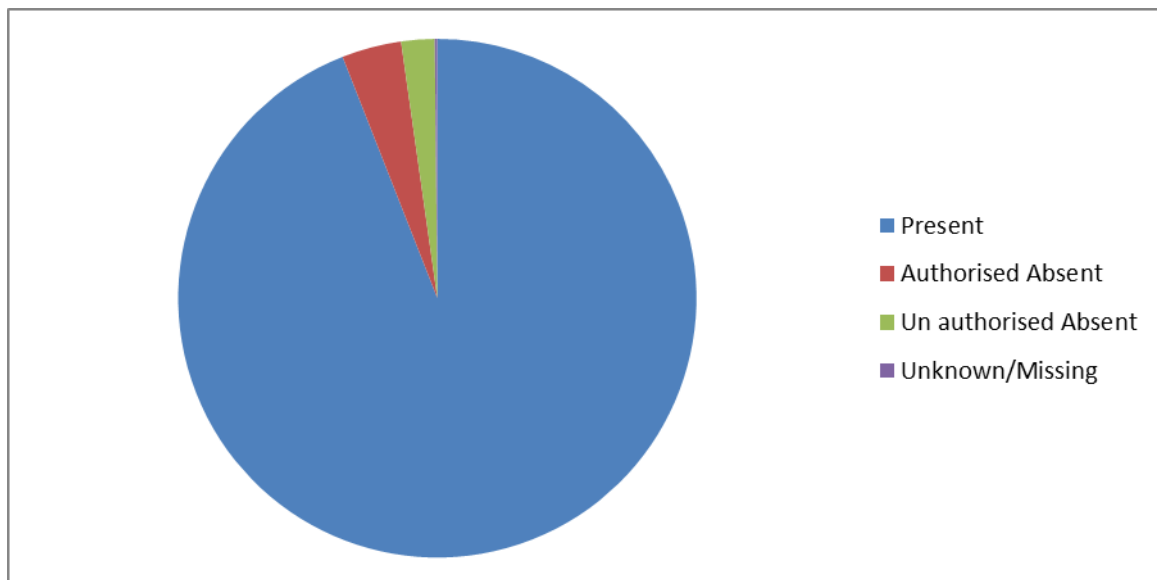
	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15
Completed within timescale	289	276	260	269	253	233	227	228	227	225	235	256
Number required	292	284	282	280	282	269	270	275	278	279	281	281
<b>PEP Completion rate</b>	<b>99.0%</b>	<b>97.2%</b>	<b>92.2%</b>	<b>96.1%</b>	<b>89.7%</b>	<b>86.6%</b>	<b>84.1%</b>	<b>82.9%</b>	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>	<b>83.6%</b>	<b>91.1%</b>



Appendix 3

**LAC - Attendance Summary Academic Years 2014-15** (prov as of 8<sup>th</sup> Sept 15)

Present	47,250	94.0%
Authorised Absent	1,867	3.7%
Un authorised Absent	1,047	2.1%
Unknown/Missing	81	0.2%
	50,243	100.0%



**LAC exclusion figures (prov) for the academic year 2014/15**

<b>2014/15 Academic Year - all exclusions are counted in sessions (half days)</b>									
Month	Children	Total - half days	Fixed	Perm	Other	Female	Male	In Derby	Out of Area
Sept	7	27	27			10	17	23	4
Oct	7	31	31				31	17	14
Nov	10	66	60		6	2	64	48	18
Dec	5	16	16				16	12	4
Jan	9	41	41			10	31	21	20
Feb	8	70	70			30	40	30	40
Mar	13	82	76	6		16	66	50	32
Apr	7	38	30	8		14	24	24	14
May	8	26	22		4	16	10	16	10
Jun	12	43	43			12	31	24	19
Jul	11	60	60			12	48	46	14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>14*</b>		<b>110</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>189</b>

\*N.B. Only one pupil was permanently excluded in the academic year 2014/15. As a result of the exclusion provision was provided at Newton's walk PRU until the end of

the academic year. This Year 6 pupil has now transferred to a mainstream secondary school in Derby.

**Commentary on exclusions table columns:**

Children – This gives the total number of children who collectively give the total number of exclusions.

Total Half days- The total number of sessions that all children have been excluded regardless of Gender or if the exclusion was fixed or permanent.

Fixed – Is the number of half days in total that all children have accrued but have been specified as a fixed exclusion

Permanent – Is the number of half days in total that all children have accrued and the school has specified the exclusion was permanent

Other – Is the number of half days but the schools have not specified if the exclusion is fixed or permanent.

Female – Is the number of exclusions attributed to female pupils

Male – Is the number of exclusions attributed to male pupils

In Derby/ Out Derby – shows how many exclusion half days have been attribute to in Derby and out of Derby pupils

The comparisons with national data are not available as yet but the latest national data shows that the number of fixed term exclusions for Derby LAC has reduced from 17.7% in 2009 to 7.3% in 2013; national the figures have reduced from 13.8% to 9.8%; and against comparator authorities the reduction has been from 15.2% to 9.8% over the same period.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Profiles of LAC who are NEET – as of 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

#### **Pupil 1 – Lives in a Derby Children's Home**

2014 school leaver. B attended mainstream education on a part-time timetable. He went to Top Tec Training from 7/10/14 – 7/11/14 but left as he said he didn't get along with the other learners. B was then referred to Learning Unlimited for a traineeship in Engineering and was on roll from 18/11/14 – 10/12/14, but never really attended as he said he wanted to go to The Skills Academy. B was then referred to The Skills Academy and attended from 26/11/15 – 12/3/15 but stopped attending as he said he didn't want to do construction. There were issues around his behaviour there too.

He was then referred to 'Splashfit' for a traineeship in Sport. B is yet to attend an interview. B takes drugs and has an offending history. He is currently waiting to be sentenced.

**Neet since 13/3/15. Neet readiness code – Offending behaviour, Substance misuse**

#### **Pupil 2 – Independent living supported by ANEW. Prior to this lived in a Children's Home in Birmingham**

2014 school leaver. Attended PRU.

When T moved back to Derby she was referred to Rathbone Training to do Health and Social Care and attended from 2/9/14 – 24/2/15. She was exited from the course due to her attitude towards other learners.

T was then referred to DBC Training for a traineeship in Business Administration. She attended for 2 days and left because she said that she didn't like the other learners.

T was then referred to one of the traineeships in Business Administration with Derby Adult Learning Services which I was told were ring-fenced for LAC/Care leavers. Unfortunately T assessment grades and written work was not at a high enough level for the original placement that she was interested in. T says that now she just wants a job and is no longer engaging with me.

**Neet since 24/2/15. Neet readiness code – Social/Confidence/Motivation**

#### **Pupil 3 – Lives in a Derby Children's Home**

2014 school leaver. Attended Bemrose

On leaving school, T went to Derby College to do Performing Arts from 1/9/14-17/11/14. She left to do childcare at CT Skills and attended from 18/11/14 – 15/12/14 and then was on the Youth Contract with Groundworks from 16/12/14 – 18/1/15. She did not attend an appointment with me in January 2015. An appointment is arranged to see me on 4/6/15.

**Neet since 19/1/15 - Neet readiness code – Social/Confidence/Motivation**

#### **Pupil 4 – Independent living supported by ANEW. Prior to this lived in Derby Children's Homes.**

2013 school leaver. Attended PRU

D attended In-Training from 4/10/13 – 27/10/13 and was on the Youth Contract with Groundworks from 28/10/13 – 21/4/14. D had not been engaging with Connexions and many appointments have been arranged to meet with D and he has not attended. As he is nearly 18 he has started to engage a little bit more and has been referred to a traineeship with Donington Park through The Babington Group and is due to start on 29/5/15.

**Neet since 22/4/14. Neet readiness code – Social/Confidence/Motivation**

#### **Pupil 5 – Independent living. Prior to this lived in Derby Children's Homes.**

2013 school leaver. Attended St Benedicts and Hospital School

C was released from custody in January 2015. Since then she has not engaged with Connexions. She is supervised by YOS and has a heroin addiction.

**Neet since 28/1/15. Neet readiness code – Offending behaviour, Substance misuse**

**Pupil 6 – Independent living. Prior to this lived in Derby Children's Homes.**

2012 school leaver. Attended PRU

M attended Top Tec training when he left school from 3/9/12 – 11/11/12 and then Rathbone training from 12/11/12 – 13/10/13. He was then unknown and couldn't be contacted until I started to work with him recently. I referred M to a Construction traineeship with The Babington Group which could have led to an apprenticeship. Unfortunately, M did not access this opportunity and since then has not been engaging.

**Neet since 23/10/14. Neet readiness code – Social/Confidence/Motivation**

**Pupil 7 – Independent living. Prior to this she lived at a Derby Children's Home.**

2012 school leaver. Attended Littleover Community School

A was engaged in learning until recently. She is now a teenage parent.

**Neet readiness code – Teenage parent/pregnant**

**Pupil 8 - Independent living. Prior to this lived in Derby Children's Homes.**

2012 school leaver. Attended West Park School

C achieved good grades at school and attended Derby College from 9/9/13-10/3/15, but left due to poor attendance. C was referred to the Business Administration traineeships with Derby Adult Learning Service, but never attended his interview. C has mental health problems and although he is currently claiming JSA he is trying to get ESA as he feels he is not fit to work.

**Neet readiness code – Social/Confidence/Motivation, Health Issues**

**Pupil 9 - Independent living. Prior to this lived in Derby Children's Homes.**

2012 school leaver. Attended PRU

T has been in and out of learning since leaving school. Her longest time in learning was with Mercia College 25/11/13 – 24/7/14. Recently T has started engaging with her career planning and has attended some appointments with me. She failed to attend a referral made for a traineeship with Derby Adult Services, but did attend a Get Into NHS programme run by The Princes Trust recently. Unfortunately, T was unsuccessful with this. T would like to get into nursing and is currently exploring doing an Access to H.E course at Derby University in September 2015.

**Neet since 25/7/14 - Neet readiness code – Social/Confidence/Motivation**

**Pupil 10 – Lives with Mum – no records on her until 3/9/14**

2012 School leaver.

I have recently begun working with J and I do not know her history as she was out of area. J has been job seeking, but has been unsuccessful. I referred her to a Business Administration traineeship with Derby City Council through Derby Adult Learning Services and she is due to start on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015.

**Neet since 6/5/15 - Neet readiness code – EET ready will move on**

**Pupil 11 – No records until 3/2/14**

2012 School leaver

J was released from prison at the end of March 2015. I met with him and referred him to a construction course at CT Skills where he will be able to work towards a CSCS card and gain work experience with an employer that is recruiting. J failed to start this training.

**Neet readiness code – Offending behaviour, Social/Confidence/Motivation**

**Pupil 12 – New to area from January 2014**

2012 school leaver.

S now lives in Burton-on-Trent. She is approximately 30 weeks pregnant.

**Neet readiness code – Teenage parent/pregnant**

**Pupil 13 - Independent living. Prior to this she lived at a Derby Children's Home.**

2012 school leaver. Attended PRU  
N had long periods of being NEET. She is now a teenage parent.  
**Neet readiness code – Teenage parent/pregnant**