



Virtual School News

News and key info
for Designated Teachers

MKCC Virtual School

At the end of another busy school year, we want to say a massive “Thank You!” for everything you do to support us as a Virtual School. The children and young people on your rolls are very lucky to have you supporting and advocating for them. From everyone at the Virtual School, we all hope you have the opportunity for a restful summer break. The Virtual School remains open across the holiday so please do get in touch if you require anything ahead of the start of term e.g., training opportunities or specific information to support preparation.

Summer Term PEPs

The deadline for Summer term PEPs has now passed and whilst there are a few meetings that are still ongoing next week due to needing to be rearranged due to illness etc., the majority of meetings have now taken place. Please ensure all outstanding ‘Part 2 – School/Provider Information’ sections on the Milton Keynes Professionals Portal have been completed and submitted ahead of the summer holidays. The Virtual School team will quality assure and process all successful Pupil Premium Plus requests over the next few weeks and return the PEP documents to you for your records ahead of the new academic year. Please remember to review the comments on the PEPs in case of future actions for supporting our child or young person as well as any actions for future meetings. If you have any concerns or queries about any aspect of the Summer term PEPs, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with your Virtual School Officer.

Spotlight on PEPs

As you know, the Virtual School leadership team review all Core PEPs for quality assurance purposes and as part of this newsletter going forwards, we will highlight key trends that have been noted during this process.

- In this edition, we would like to remind Designated Teachers that targets must be reviewed as part of preparation for the meeting. These are noted in the table in ‘Part 2 School/Provider Information’ and there is a column to note whether the target has been achieved and a further column to note comments regarding the progress of the target, any key next steps and any notable impact. These columns are frequently left blank but the information that can be captured here could be valuable. In preparation for your next Core PEP, please ensure these boxes are completed.

Some Designated Teachers have requested clarity on how they can access Pupil Premium Plus funding outside of PEP meetings due to emerging need. Whilst this is not something we would encourage frequently, as Pupil Premium Plus funding agreement should be associated with high quality SMART targets discussed between professionals in the PEP meeting, we recognise that sometimes education settings need funding quickly to secure interventions and opportunities which arise between scheduled PEP meetings. If this is ever the case for you and a child that you support, you can contact the Virtual School Officer assigned to the case who will explore the nature of need with you and then seek approval from the Virtual School leadership team. This request will be noted on the child's records and the impact of the agreed funding will be discussed at the next PEP meeting.

Results Day 2024

A reminder that we need your support to collect results for our young people receiving their Level 2 and Level 3 exam results on 15th and 22nd August 2024. For some of our young people, the deadlines for making their decision on next steps and confirming with providers is literally a few hours and we would like to be able to support them and their families/professionals with as much information as possible. The Virtual School will be running a results day 'Support Hub' on 22nd August 2024 and we invite you to contact us if you have any concerns about the young people you are supporting so that we can follow-up. Please contact your Virtual School Officer or Virtual School Head directly on the day – Katy.Enser@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk.

New to Role of Designated Teacher Training

If this is your last term in the role of Designated Teacher at your setting and you are preparing to handover to a colleague, please consider letting them know that we will be running a 'New to role of Designated Teacher' training session on Thursday 26th September 2024 at 4pm (delivered virtually via Teams). This session would be suitable for anyone who is new to the role of Designated Teacher or who wants to understand Milton Keynes processes in a little more detail. Updated information about the Virtual School for 24/25 will be circulated in September 2024.

If you would like to register interest on behalf of your setting, please email Katy.Enser@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk.

Working Together to Improve School Attendance

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

The updated 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance comes into force on 19th April 2024. There remains a focus on Virtual Schools to regularly monitor the attendance of children who are looked after and we will continue to do this via our external attendance monitoring provider – Welfare Call. Welfare Call will continue to liaise with your attendance teams to collect attendance data daily (or weekly in the case of post-16 settings). The Virtual School will continue to discuss attendance as part of PEP meetings to secure regular attendance of this group of children as part of our role as corporate parents.

As part of a role extension for Virtual School Heads, local authorities are expected to use their Virtual School to provide training for Designated Teachers about their role in promoting the attendance of children who have ever needed a social worker. Further information on this will follow in September.

The guidance is a very useful document which outlines everyone's role in supporting attendance, especially for our most vulnerable pupils and we would recommend being familiar with the importance of school attendance and expectations of schools' sections to support conversations that might take place in PEP meetings.

Training Opportunities

A reminder that there is a variety of training opportunities available free of charge to settings supporting children looked after by Milton Keynes City Council. Our full training offer can be found on our website: [Training and support | Milton Keynes City Council \(milton-keynes.gov.uk\)](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/training-and-support). There is a wide variety of different options including e-learning and whole school face to face training.

Please don't hesitate to contact Katy Enser – Katy.Enser@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk – for further information if this would be of interest to you.