

## Peterborough Virtual School Vision

***“All Children Known to Social Care will achieve educational outcomes enabling them to lead healthy, happy and fulfilled lives.”***

This document is the 3-year strategic plan (2024-2027) for Peterborough Virtual School.

- It includes how this fits with the existing city priorities and the corporate strategy.
- It considers the specific priorities of the Education Service.
- It details annual implementation planning for the academic year 2025/26.

## Our City Priorities



### Children and Young People

We will ensure every child in our care receives the same high-quality support and opportunities that we would all strive to achieve for our own children. We will:

- Provide the best support possible for vulnerable children and young people
- Open new schools and increase the number of school places locally to provide the best education possible for all our children and young people, including those with special education needs (SEND)
- Establish a multi-agency safeguarding hub in the city
- Provide the best opportunities for young people in care and leaving care
- Reduce reoffending by supporting children and young people known to Youth Justice

**2025-26: A revised Children’s Services Vision and Strategy is currently in development and this page will be updated once that has been published.**

Education Services, as part of Children's Services, are particularly focused on the following, to support the City Priorities and Corporate Strategy:

1. Early years and childcare expansion of places and take up, including meeting the needs of SEND children early and delivering the Government's agenda on 2-year-old take up and Wraparound provision.
2. Increasing the availability of school places to meet demand, including migration into Peterborough over the summer.
3. Developing education capital projects and delivering new schools, with Corporate Services.
4. Attendance, particularly persistence absence, and delivering the new statutory requirements.
5. Meeting the requirement from the ILACS November 2023 for Children Missing Education and Elective Home Education.
6. Reducing Exclusions and the use of Alternative Provision.
7. Developing preventative approaches that meet the needs of SEND children, what is ordinarily available, the graduated response, at SEN Support and also within City provision (including Special Schools), reducing the pressure on the High Needs Block.
8. Supporting the work of schools and settings to significantly improve attainment, as well as narrowing the gap for groups of children vulnerable to poor outcomes.
9. Increasing the number of children and young people with well-matched Education, Employment and Training opportunities to enable positive transition to adulthood.
10. Further developing Transport commissioning and delivery to ensure best value is achieved.

**2025-26: A revised Education Strategy is currently in development and this page will be updated once that has been published.**



## BELONGING

## TRACKING



CURIOSITY

CHILDREN  
IN CARE

**CORPORATE PARENTING**

## CARE LEAVERS

**EMPLOYMENT  
& TRAINING**

## EDUCATION

ACCEPTANCE

**SUCCESS**

## ACHIEVEMENT

...ENABLING THEM TO  
LIVE HEALTHY, HAPPY...

AND FULFILLED LIVES

**Visibility**

CHILDREN  
SUBJECT TO A  
CHILD IN NEED OR  
CHILD PROTECTION PLAN

## SUPPORT

RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE  
FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK

## OUR TEAM

16-25

CHILDREN  
PREVIOUSLY  
IN CARE

WELL MATCHED  
EDUCATION

**ADVICE & INFORMATION**

CHILDREN  
LIVING IN  
KINSHIP CARE  
ARRANGEMENTS

EMPOWERMENT

ALL CHILDREN KNOW  
WILL ACHIEVE



OWN TO SOCIAL CARE  
ASPIRATIONAL  
TIONAL OUTCOMES.  
CHILDREN  
LIVING IN

**BREAKING BARRIERS**



**SOCIAL WORKERS**

PEPs & PP+

...ENABLING THEM  
LIVE HEALTHY, HAPPY.

A cartoon illustration of a church with a blue banner that says 'EMPOWERMENT'. The church is drawn in a simple, stylized manner with orange and yellow tones. It features several tall, pointed spires and arched windows. A blue banner with the word 'EMPOWERMENT' in white capital letters is attached to the top of the church. The background is a solid yellow color.



## PETERBOROUGH VIRTUAL SCHOOL

### 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN (2024-2027)

Our PEPs are robust and meaningful documents and serve as an effective tool for promoting educational outcomes.

So that...

The PEP provides a robust narrative of the child's educational journey over time detailing impact of interventions and progress towards aspirations.

Our tiered offer is established and embedded, empowering all stakeholders to meet the evolving needs of our cohort.

So that...

Well-matched educational provision effectively meets the needs of the full cohort leading to improved outcomes.

Partnership working supports stakeholders and partners to view education as a priority for all children known to social care.

So that...

There is a collective responsibility for the education of children known to social care to champion educational outcomes effectively.

Our strategic and operational work is underpinned by and responsive to accurate intelligence.

So that...

Intelligence and a wide evidence base enable preventative work to take place which minimises risk for children.

**2025-26: Changes to legislation and statutory duties will be implemented at pace in response to the forthcoming Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill** [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

### Self-Evaluation (Why?)

- Our PEP templates have been developed to be fit for purpose
- Submission deadlines are well established, QA compliance and follow-up processes are embedded and enable effective analysis
- Resources and training are established to support PEP quality and compliance. DT training is well established and responds to need. It receives positive feedback. Carers and SW training is less well established.
- Summer 2025 PEP attendance for SWs = 72%, Carers = 80%, Child = 38%
- Summer 2025 PEP achieved or exceeded standard for SWs = 29.1%
- Attainment and progress data is not robust enough due to variation in understanding of the measurement scale and inaccuracies in the data input
- PEP meetings are not always child-friendly and the child's voice is not always prominent
- Scrutiny of PEPs by IROs and Team Managers requires development
- The quality of Post 16 PEPs is not yet sufficient; the support for young people to achieve Desirable Outcomes is not always robust or individualised enough for it to have impact
- The quality of NEET PEPs requires enhancement

### Implementation (What & how?)

#### Short-term (Year 2)

- The Progress & Attainment section of PEP templates will be further developed to ensure they are fit for purpose for all phases of education
- Quality assurance processes will be strengthened further to include a focus on quality alongside compliance. This will be undertaken through thematic audits alongside key partners including Designated Teachers, Social Workers and IROs.
- Carer network meetings will be launched alongside additional resources materials to strengthen carer's voice and input
- The 'Child Voice' section of the PEP will be developed and embedded throughout the document. The design will be co-produced with our children and young people.
- Resources and training will be developed to support all professionals to enable PEP meetings to be increasingly child-friendly
- Support for social workers around PEP quality and compliance will be developed in collaboration with service managers and team managers. Data will be shared to track and monitor improvements.
- Complete analysis of strengths and weaknesses of post-16 and NEET PEPs and develop a response which addresses next steps

### Outcomes (How will we know?)

#### Short-term (Year 2)

- Progress & Attainment data will enable accurate monitoring and tracking for individuals and cohorts
- The quality assurance process will provide evaluations of themes and issues which will inform strategic focusses
- All stakeholders will be able to recognise effective PEP quality and how it contributes to overall care planning.
- Social worker completion of PEPs will increase.
- Carers contributions to PEPs will be relevant and effective
- Residential key workers will understand the importance of education and how best they can support young people in their care
- Our children will tell us that their PEP meetings are friendly and relevant to them (CiCC). Their voices will be prominent within the document
- The tone and language written in PEPs will be child-friendly and empowering
- Post 16 PEPs increase in quality, specifically the DO section
- NEET PEPs will be relevant to the individual young person with a focus on aspirational outcomes and tracking progress

### Impact (So what..?)

#### Short-term (Year 1)

- The quality and compliance of PEPs improves.
- Targeted advice and support will be offered at an individual level to schools through the advisory meetings and follow up work.

#### Medium-term (Year 2)

- All stakeholders will support the production of effective PEPs
- Responses to data lead to targeted conversations and interventions which directly impact provision and experiences for children

#### Long-term (Year 3)

- The PEP provides a robust narrative of the child's educational journey over time detailing impact of interventions and progress towards aspirations.

PEP = Personal Education Plan  
DT = Designated Teacher  
SW = Social Worker  
IRO = Independent Reviewing Officer  
EET = Education, Employment & Training  
NEET = Not in Education, Employment & training  
CiCC = Child in Care Council

### Self-Evaluation (Why?)

- Both strategic and operational practice for Statutory School Age Children in Care is mirrored for CiC within the Post 16 cohort. Practice needs strengthening for care leaver cohort and NEET cohort.
- Attendance tracking systems for Post 16 have been initiated but are not embedded or robust.
- Disciplinary notifications are not always received in a timely manner preventing early intervention.
- The Post 16 IGP tool has been revised and the Care Leaver IGP tool has been established but is not embedded
- Improved knowledge of the care leaver cohort is feeding into planning for this cohort.
- EET Offer for care leavers is embedded within the Local Offer
- There is a robust HE offer for Y13 which has facilitated 9 young people on a HE pathway for 25/26 academic year. The HE offer is less established for other year groups
- Through Broadening Education Pathways, one Y11 will attend Bedford School (independent setting) for Post 16
- There is limited provision for improving work readiness for the Post 16 cohort
- Within PCC, HR practices are in place to facilitate access to employment opportunities for care leavers. There are currently 5 apprenticeship opportunities ring-fenced for care leavers

### Implementation (What & how?)

#### Short-term (Year 2)

- Disciplinary notification system will be explored with eGOV (linked to attendance system) and appropriate communication & training for settings will be delivered
- Virtual School NEET support will be aligned with the EET Service to focus on aspirational outcomes and tracking progress
- Enhanced scrutiny and analysis of the NEET cohort will inform strategic and operational next steps
- Following PEP QA, those at risk of becoming NEET will be identified and supported through enhanced I&E oversight
- The Care Leaver IGP tool will be a primary focus of Post 16 Advisory meetings
- The HE offer will be extended to encompass raising awareness of HE as a pathway for CiC before Y13
- Work readiness opportunities will be piloted
- Practice development opportunities will be provided for the Leaving Care Service
- The principles of the Family Business model will be extended to external organisations
- Mechanisms will be in place to increase care leaver awareness of EET opportunities (including those closed to LCS)
- EET drop In processes will be revised to enable tracking and legacy/impact of interactions
- A UCiC offer will be produced to ensure the bespoke needs of this cohort are fully met

### Outcomes (How will we know?)

#### Short-term (Year 2)

- Disciplinary alerts will enable early triage reducing the number of young people at Level 3/4 disciplinary stages
- NEET young people will receive high quality support with a focus on aspirational outcomes and tracking progress
- Young people at risk of becoming NEET will receive earlier support to ensure alternatives are in place
- Cohort analysis will identify trends and patterns to allow system-wide prevention planning
- Further Education providers will understand the needs of Care Leavers in their culture, policy and practice
- Young people from Year 9 onwards will attend HE events and share HE aspirations through the PEP
- Young people who participate in work readiness opportunities will engage in a sustained EET pathway
- Collaborative working with the Leaving Care Service is visible and reduces duplication of task.
- There will be ring-fenced Care Leavers opportunities from organisations outside of PCC
- Sustained and repeated visits to the EET drop-ins will be evidenced for some young people
- There will be an increase in the number of UCiC engaging in EET

### Impact (So what..?)

#### Short-term (Year 1)

- There is an intelligence led, offer for CL EET engagement
- Early identification of inclusion and engagement concerns minimise risk of NEET
- PAs can effectively advise around EET opportunities

#### Medium-term (Year 2)

- Trends are identified to facilitate targeted CL EET offer
- There will be an increase in HE participation
- NEET young people will report feeling supported and understand the variety of pathways available to them

#### Long-term (Year 3)

- There will be an increase in CL re-engagement with education
- Careers Information, Advice and Guidance is effective and bespoke enabling effective long-term EET planning

CL = Care Leavers  
CiC = Children in Care  
EET = Education, Employment & Training  
NEET = Not in Education, Employment & training  
PA = Personal Advisor  
LCS = Leaving Care Service  
eGOV = commissioned PEP provider  
HE = Higher Education  
IGP = Indicators of Good practice  
UCiC = Unaccompanied Children in Care  
PCC = Peterborough City Council

### Self-Evaluation (Why?)

- The Virtual School offer has been established and shared with stakeholders
- There is consistency of approach throughout the Virtual School
- Feedback from Peterborough schools demonstrates that the vision is understood and articulated clearly
- 83% of Peterborough schools are engaged with advisory meetings. This is an extension from previously focussing on schools where only CiC attended.
- Inclusion and Engagement tracking systems are embedded and effective
- Training within schools and DT network meetings have developed
- Through increased awareness, there has been a significant increase (275%) in requests for advice and guidance for CPiC and Kinship.
- Introductory meetings (where an out of city school has not had a Peterborough CiC before) have been effective in establishing understanding of Peterborough processes
- 111 children of statutory school age received intensive support from the inclusion and engagement team
- 72.6% of our children had attendance of 90% or over
- Three permanent exclusions were withdrawn for children in care following Virtual School intervention

### Implementation (What & how?)

#### Short-term (Year 2)

- Governors and trustee training will be developed
- An escalation process will be established to ensure engagement from settings who are not fully compliant
- A dashboard will be devised to enable 'intelligence at a glance' to support advisory visits and wider strategic considerations
- Attendance collection for all cohorts of children known to social care will be captured through Study Bugs and analysed to inform next steps
- An Early Years offer will be designed and embedded to support meeting the needs of this cohort and supporting stakeholders
- A pilot will be undertaken with one MAT to progress an identified area of policy, practice and culture, for all children known to social care
- Our revised Relational and Restorative Practice Offer will be launched in collaboration with wider partners across and beyond Children's Services
- An 'Ordinarily Available and Inclusive Provision' (OAIP) document to support all children known to social care will be published. This will include a PEP style document for children previously in care
- The process for requests for advice and guidance for children previously in care will be streamlined
- Termly analysis of attendance data (including those on bespoke provision packages and reduced timetables) will enable the piloting of preventative work and early intervention
- Reintegration pathways for children on bespoke packages and those who are CME will be detailed

### Outcomes (How will we know?)

#### Short-term (Year 2)

- Governors and trustees will hold senior leaders to account through appropriate support and challenge
- Identified settings are compliant
- The dashboard serves as an effective tool to support advisory visits
- Accurate attendance collection is in place for all cohorts of children known to social care and is being used to support targeted work.
- There will be an Early Years offer which settings engage with
- A case study will be available to show the impact on strategic advisory work at a MAT level
- The revised Relational Practice offer is available and published.
- The OAIP provides a tool which informs the quality of desirable outcomes and wider planning for all children known to social care
- Voices of key partners report that the process for seeking advice and guidance for children previously in care is understood and efficient
- A case study will be available to show the impact of preventative work and early intervention
- Reintegration pathways will be detailed on the PEP and within Liquid Logic.

### Impact (So what..?)

#### Short-term (Year 1)

- Advisory work is well established across all Peterborough settings
- New processes, including those around attendance analysis, are established and consistent across the wider virtual school team.

#### Medium-term (Year 2)

- Pilot work provides a platform for informing strategic and preventative approaches
- The quality of work for Children in Care is mirrored across all cohorts of children known to social care

#### Long-term (Year 3)

- The DT role in school is high profile and all staff across settings are aware of and respond to the needs of our children in care and wider cohort.
- School and trusts meet the needs of all children known to social care and understand the role of education as a protective and transformative factor.

IGP = Indicators of Good Practice  
 CPiC = Children Previously in Care  
 CME = Child Missing Education  
 DT = Designated Teacher  
 MAT = Multi-Academy Trust  
 PEP = Personal Education Plan  
 OAIP = Ordinarily Available and Inclusive Provision



### Self-Evaluation (Why?)

- PEPs provide an effective mechanism to collect data which identifies facilitators and barriers to high attainment. This informs operational work.
- Attainment and progress data is collected termly and is beginning to provide a picture of the educational journeys for individuals and at a cohort level. There is currently variation in professional judgements from DTs and this needs standardising.
- Attendance data for SSA children in care is collected and effectively analysed to inform early and targeted interventions.
- Study Bugs (attendance platform) has been purchased to facilitate attendance data collection for all children across the city.
- There was a small uplift in the number of CPiC recorded in the October census.
- Dashboards have been built to enable the presentation of key data sets. They are developing to meet the required and evolving need of the Virtual School.
- Data regarding social worker quality and compliance of PEPs is shared with heads of service in CSC.
- Proactive data sharing with education colleagues is effective. There are barriers due to disparate platforms with CSC.
- Care Leaver EET data is unreliable and inconsistent

### Implementation (What & how?) - Year 2

#### Short-term (Year 2)

- Through advisory visits, additional training and guidance baselines and criteria will be established to ensure parity of professional judgement for progress and attitude to learning. A Power BI dashboard will underpin support and challenge.
- A PowerBI dashboard will be developed to facilitate cohort level attainment and progress tracking.
- Forecasting of target setting will be developed to enable aspirational goals.
- Collaboration with data leads and senior leaders in schools and trusts will ensure that social care status is accurately flagged through VYED and studybugs.
- Attendance tracking and monitoring will be extended through Year 12 and 13 through the ePEP platform for children in care.
- The feasibility of Early Years attendance tracking and monitoring will be explored.
- The implementation of the EYES platform (planned Autumn 2025) will enable the matching of children between social care and education systems.
- Pathway plans will be developed to facilitate extraction of EET data and inform operational work with individuals and the wider cohort.
- NEET cohort analysis will inform strategic planning alongside the EET service.

### Outcomes (How will we know?)

#### Short-term (Year 2)

- Data collected from a range of schools and trusts will be standardised and comparable to enable effective tracking and analysis of cohorts. This will be evidenced through a Power BI dashboard.
- Designated Teachers will report increased confidence in completing the attainment and progress in the PEP.
- Peterborough Virtual School will be able to target set for individual children and cohorts.
- Attendance data returned through studybugs will be accurate and enable targeted conversations and the development of priorities for specific cohorts
- Attendance data will inform schools causing concern discussions
- Attendance data for children in care in years 12 and 13 will be scrutinised weekly to support early intervention
- The EYES and LL platforms will be linked with a unique identifier ensuring the social care status of children is visible for education colleagues
- Accurate and robust data which informs EET pathway planning will be available to inform strategic and operational priorities
- Accurate and robust NEET cohort analysis will be available

### Impact (So what..?)

#### Short-term (Year 1)

- There is an increase in the % of CPiC who receive PP+ due to census accuracy.
- Targeted work increases inclusion, engagement and progress of individual children.

#### Medium-term (Year 2)

- Robust data enables strategic work
- Tracking of data over time informs operational and strategic developments.

#### Long-term (Year 3)

- Trends and patterns are recognised to enable preventative work to take place which minimise risk for children.

PEP = Personal Education Plan  
 DTs = Designated Teachers  
 CPiC = Children Previously in Care  
 CSC = Children's Social Care  
 LA = Local Authority  
 EET = Education, Employment & Training  
 NEET = Not in Education, Employment & Training  
 VYED = View your education data  
 Power BI = Interactive data visualisation software  
 EYES = Early Years and Education (software platform)  
 LL = Liquid Logic (Social Care software platform)