

# EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH A SOCIAL WORKER: NEWSLETTER

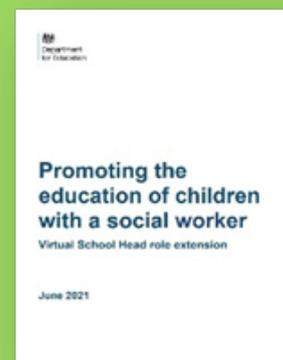


## Introduction

Hello and welcome to the first issue of our newsletter for education and children's social care professionals to keep you in touch with news and developments about how Northumberland local authority is fulfilling a new duty to promote the education of children with a social worker. The new duty is an extension of the Virtual School Headteacher's role, recognising the knowledge and expertise gained from our work promoting the educational outcomes of looked-after and previously looked-after children. It's all about how education and children's social care work together, and developing a better understanding of the disadvantages that children with a social worker can experience so that we can identify what works to overcome them. During the summer term we will be publishing several copies of the newsletter so that you know what we are doing and how you can get involved.

Jane Walker, Northumberland's Virtual School Headteacher

The DfE guidance about the new duty can be found [HERE](#)



## Did you know that

- 1.6 million children needed a social worker over a 6 year period, the equivalent of 1 in 10 children or 3 children in every classroom
- At the end of Key Stage 4 were around 3 times less likely to go on to study A levels at age 16
- Children with a social worker are around 3 times more likely to be persistently absent from school and between 2 to 4 times more likely to be permanently excluded from school
- Of the cohort of children who were looked-after children in 2017-18, 62% had spent some time on a Child in Need plan in the previous 5 years and 39% had spent some time on a Child Protection plan.

## Why help is needed

On average, children with a social worker do worse than their peers at every stage of their education. The government's latest [statistical release](#) published on 31st March 2022 tells us just how far behind their peers the achievement of this group of children is. In Northumberland the picture is similar to the national one. We have compared the attainment between groups of children who have had a social worker for at least 3 months in one academic year to those who have had no involvement with a social worker. The gaps in achievement between children with and children with no social worker are big and haven't closed much over the last 5 years.

**End of Reception year: % of children achieving a good level of development**

With	Without
46	75

**End of Year 2: % of children achieving expected standard at Key Stage 1**

With	Without
Maths 58	Maths 80
Reading 58	Reading 81
Writing 42	Writing 75

**End of Year 6: % of children achieving expected standard at Key Stage 2**

With	Without
Maths 47	Maths 76
Reading 48	Reading 75
Writing 53	Writing 81

**End of Year 11: average attainment at Key Stage 4 across 8 subjects (Attainment 8)**

With	Without
24.7%	46.6%

**Who are this group of children?**

All children and young people age 0-18 who have, or have had, a social worker in Northumberland that group is approximately almost 2000 children.

**WHAT IT'S NOT**

- The role does not require the VSH to provide direct intervention, help and support for individual children with a social worker or their families
- Work with individual children and their families - including tracking and monitoring educational progress of individual children or providing academic or other interventions
- Respond to requests from parents or carers to offer advice, intervention and support in relation to individual children with a social worker
- Take responsibility for children with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) who do not require or need a social worker

**NO CHANGE**

- Pupil Premium for children eligible for free school meals
- Pupil Premium Plus for looked after and previously looked after children
- Statutory guidance regarding the education of looked after and previously looked after children

It's not about introducing a new support service, it's about knowing what we already have, that it's the best quality it can be, and that professionals know how and when to intervene to support children with a social worker to do their best in education  
It's about the relationship between education and social care and the key professionals that will make the biggest difference are:



## How we're doing it in Northumberland

Our project lead is the Virtual School Headteacher, Jane Walker  
Our project manager is Senior Project and Development Manager, Catherine MacDonald

There is a strategic project co-ordination group with Terms of Reference and a project plan

### The project plan has 4 phases

#### 1 Planning

- To enhance partnerships between CSC and education settings
- By end of Spring Term 2022

#### 2 Mapping

- To identify cohorts needs and interventions
- By end of Summer Term 2022

#### 3 Joining Up

- To support and advise key professionals
- By end of Autumn Term 2022

#### 4 Developing

- Ongoing monitoring and development

### Members of the strategic project co-ordination group are leading on 4 workstreams

#### 1. Attendance

Led by Sarah Wintringham  
(Principal Education Welfare Officer)

#### 2. Behaviour

Led by Tara Prescott (Deputy Virtual School Headteacher)

#### 3. Learning

Led by Jane Kennedy (School Improvement Lead, disadvantaged children)

#### 4. Wellbeing

Led by Katinka Bryan (Manager, Psychological Services)

### Our goals

The glue that joins it all together are the children's social workers and Designated Safeguarding Leads, represented by Adele Moore (Head of Service Children's Social Care) and Alan Rogers Headteacher and Designated (Safeguarding Lead, The Duchess's Community High School Alnwick). All of the work of the

To make visible the disadvantages that children with a social worker can experience, enhancing partnerships between education settings and CSC to help all agencies hold high aspirations for these children.

To promote practice that supports children's engagement in education, recognising that attending an education setting can be an important factor in helping to keep children safe from harm.

To empower schools to level up children's outcomes and narrow the attainment gap so every child can reach their potential. This will include helping to make sure that children with, or who have had a social worker, benefit from support to recover from the impact of COVID-19.

project leads is being informed by data support from Brian Smeaton (Children's Improvement and Development Manager). The resources developed during the project will be made available on a sharepoint webpage.

### Coming up before the end of July

- A consultation with children's social workers and Designated Safeguarding Leads will open during the summer term to gather views to inform the project, including what works in education for children with a social worker and training needs
- The next issue of the Education of Children with a Social Worker newsletter, with a focus on the **ATTENDANCE** workstream
- More of what to expect from September 2022