



Supporting Children with a Social Worker

Exploring the Virtual School support for Children with a Social worker



Definition of Child with a Social Worker

- 01 Child Protection Plan
- 02 Child in Need Plan
- 03 Child with a Social Worker NO Statutory Plan
- 04 Formal Kinship Care
- 05 Special Guardianship Order
- 06 Previously Looked After
- 07 Been on/ off one of the above criteria within a 6 year period



All should be tracked and monitored by your Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

Background



In September 2021, the Government extended duties of the Virtual School to include children with a social worker.

This included developing the role of the Virtual School Head, so they have strategic oversight in promoting the educational outcomes of the cohort of children with a social worker and those who have previously had a social worker who are aged from 0 up to 18.

Schools/Academies have a legal responsibility to provide education and not discriminate against a pupil in how they provide education (Equality Act, 2010).

In November 2024, the Government announced support for CwSW would become statutory, managed by the Virtual School

Priorities



1

Make visible the disadvantages that children with a social worker can experience, enhancing partnerships between education settings and local authorities, including with children's social care, to help all agencies hold high aspirations for these children.

2

Promote practice that supports children's engagement in education, recognising that attending an education setting is an important factor in helping to keep children safe from harm

3

Narrow the attainment gap so every child has the opportunity to reach their potential – including helping to ensure that children with a social worker benefit from support to recover educationally from the impact of the pandemic.

Staff Development



Whole school
Senior leaders
Support staff



Online offer



Targeted Support



Attendance Support



Whole School
Attachment
and Trauma
Training

Reflective
Spaces

CwSW
Advice and
Guidance

Suspension
and Exclusion
support

Principles of
Theraplay

Key Adult
Training

Senior
Leader
Training

Designated
Teacher
Support

ARC
Support

Bespoke
packages

PLAC
support



Developing Relationships

“Paying attention to promoting positive and nurturing relationships in school does not detract from academic achievement; it actually supports and encourages it. Regardless of their background, children with higher levels of emotional and social wellbeing achieve better academically and are more engaged in school.” (Brooks, 2019, p42)

1

The essence of relational approaches is to understand behaviours compassionately and as a response to relationships. In order to further develop understanding of positive relationships, these relationships need to be re-experienced positively and it is therefore the responsibility of adults to provide positive, attuned and containing relationships for children and young people affected by challenging relationship experiences.

2

Relational approaches start with our core beliefs about how we see and interact with others. This includes positive and attuned interactions with the adults, including the families and carers we work with. Through our interactions we communicate our beliefs about a person and interactions in themselves can be a positive ‘intervention’, which provides support and containment in order to meet someone where they are and work collaboratively and non-judgementally together.

3

“The idea that behaviour management is simply about learning a set of techniques that emerge from a teacher’s ‘toolkit’ is a dangerous one. Outstanding management of behaviour and relationships is simply not skills led. Neither is it imported with ‘magic’ behaviour systems, bought with data tracking software or instantly achieved by calling a school an academy. . This culture is set by the way that the adults behave’. (Dix, 2017, p2).

Supporting Attendance

“School belonging, at both a school and university level, has been well documented as a predictor of academic and psychosocial success.” (Slatern et al, 2016, p1). ImpactEd Evaluation report (2024), based on drivers of pupil absence from over 30,000 young people in England’, found that a sense of school belonging is a key driver of attendance across all context. The research concludes, “This would seem to indicate that the barrier is not awareness of sanctions as much as more fundamental questions about pupils feeling part of their school”.

“I have massive anxiety about school. It’s quite intimidating and there’s too much pressure. We have constant assemblies about how we have to be, how well we are expected to do, how we have to get the best grades...but we don’t get any help doing it!”

“They push you to be perfect, it’s so stressful!”



Enabling Progress

We know that what works for CwSW, isn't always the same as what works for the rest of your school population.

1

Relationships first

Connection before progress

2

What works?

Education Endowment Fund research

3

Understand your cohort

What are the needs? What are your skills?
What are the gaps?



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