Cambridgeshire Virtual School Offer

Vision

All care-experienced children and young people (CYP) will have the opportunities, experience and support to enable them to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their maximum potential.

Guiding Principles

- The voice of the CYP is of paramount importance
- All care-experienced CYP will receive high quality education which is inspiring and challenging, resulting in the best possible outcomes, thus closing the educational gap between these CYP and those who are not care experienced
- Every care-experienced CYP will have a positive educational experience which promotes social and emotional learning and wellbeing alongside academic success to ensure readiness for adulthood.
- Every school and setting will be empowered and able to lead the changes necessary to enable our children to thrive
- The Virtual School will meet the needs of care-experienced CYP through effective liaison and integrated work with all key partners

Context

Since April 2014, every local authority in England has had to appoint at least one person to fulfil the local authority's statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of its children in care, wherever they live or are educated. This person is called the Head of the Virtual School. Within Cambridgeshire we have a team of education professionals that supports the Virtual School Head in fulfilling these responsibilities.

Cambridgeshire Virtual School support children and young people between the ages of 2 and 18.

The statutory remit of the Virtual School expanded in September 2018 to include information and advice for children previously in care including those who have been adopted from care and those under special guardianship and child arrangement orders. Cambridgeshire Virtual School are responsible for previously looked after CYP attending a Cambridgeshire school or education setting.

Priorities

To promote high aspirations and raise achievement through challenge, support and targeted intervention. This is fulfilled by:

- Supporting care experienced CYP to access and achieve in education and training
- Promoting care experienced CYP's need to access high quality support, which meets their needs in a timely way
- Working closely with all those involved in providing education to ensure they understand the issues and challenges facing our CYP and their role in working together to respond to and overcome them;
- Working to reduce the challenges resulting from changes of care placement or school
- Challenging barriers to engagement and good attendance
- Promoting equality and equity

Offer

1. Child-centred
   - To ensure the voice of the CYP is paramount within the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process
   - To monitor the attainment and progress of all CYP in care and provide challenge and support in order to maximise this
   - To manage and distribute the pupil premium grant and ensure that it is used effectively by schools and settings in order that CYP in care achieve specific outcomes as detailed in their PEPs
• To advocate on behalf of the CYP where it is felt that the school is not fully meeting individual needs
• To provide information and advice to ensure children previously in care achieve their maximum potential in education

2. School Improvement (including EY and post-16 settings)
• To support schools, specifically designated teachers, to carry out statutory duties including completion of the Personal Education Plan (PEP)
• To support EY and post-16 settings, specifically designated persons, to carry out statutory duties including completion of the Personal Education Plan (PEP)
• To deliver training which addresses particular needs of care experienced CYP including children previously in care, attachment, trauma and foetal alcohol spectrum disorders
• To promote aspirational attitudes when setting targets and outcomes for care experienced CYP
• To promote culture, policy and practice within schools which take account of the specific vulnerabilities of care experienced CYP

3. Access and Inclusion
• To hold a detailed knowledge of individual schools and settings in order to secure the best provision
• To have knowledge of services within and beyond the LA in order to access additional support where appropriate
• To support the admissions process in order to avoid drift
• To challenge attendance issues and support interventions to improve outcomes
• To monitor exclusions and CYP not accessing full time education to challenge and improve outcomes

4. Key Partners
• To deliver training to social workers, foster carers and other key partners to promote the educational needs of care experienced CYP
• To work in partnership with other key partners, within and beyond the LA, to secure the best possible educational outcomes