

VIRTUAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER | AUTUMN 2024

HELPING EVERY CHILD TO THRIVE



Meet the team



My name is

Hannah Anderson, and I'm the Virtual School Lead for Looked After Children who fall in the 'hard to place' category.

I've began working for the Aspire Virtual School in 2016. Previously, I worked for the Waltham Forest Virtual School and have taught at several secondary Pupil Referral Units.

I love the job and am always impressed by our DT's who demonstrate a high level of expertise. They work tirelessly to ensure the safety, wellbeing and academic achievement of each child has been accommodated for. Our Social Worker colleagues too are invaluable ensuring the pep rightly sits within the care plan for each child.

I am focused on supporting the educational outcomes for Looked After Children and our end of phase results continue to show that our collective joined up practice does make a substantial difference.

EXAM RESULTS & DESTINATIONS

CELEBRATIONS

This year the Virtual School celebrates our students who have progressed to university and apprenticeship. Below are some of the results and destinations achieved by our students

- A Levels achieved in Film Studies and a Technical Diploma in Physical Education - UEL to study Sport Science
- A-Levels achieved in Religious Studies, Politics and History - Bournemouth University to study Politics
- BTEC in Photography, A Level English Language and Media Studies - Essex University to study for a BA in Modern Languages

We also have students who have progressed to apprenticeship

- Child Care Level 3 Apprenticeship in Lefy Nursery
- IT Apprenticeship Level 3 in Field Fisher Law Firm .

Spring Term 2025

FOSTER CARER / KINSHIP CARE TRAINING

How to make home learning easier

THURS 16TH JAN 2025

@ The Vibe, Dagenham

DT NETWORK MEETING

8.30am -12.30pm : WED 5TH FEB 2025

@ Aspire Building, Warren Juniors

FOSTER CARER / KINSHIP CARE COFFEE MORNING

9.00 - 11.00am THURS 8TH FEB 2025

@ Couler Café (Opp. Barking Town Hall)

PEP DEADLINE

FRI 14TH MAR 2025

ePEP TRAINING FOR SW's & DT's

This is an online training. To register please contact Tricia Butler : tricia.butler@lbbd.gov.uk

THURS 23RD JAN 2025

THURS 27TH FEB 2025

THURS 27TH MAR 2025



SUMMER CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

This summer was exciting with various curriculum enrichment activities organised by the Virtual School. It started with the International Youth Camp in Austria. This offered young people the opportunity to develop life skills in a new and dynamic environment. The trip provided exposure to different cultures and experiences, helping them build their confidence and broaden their world view. For some of the young people it was their first trip out of London. They got involved in team building activities, went mountain climbing, swimming and cooking a traditional English meal.

The students said:

"I LOVED MEETING THE MANY INTERESTING PEOPLE OF THE CAMP AND BEING ABLE TO SEE AND EXPLORE THE AUSTRIAN LANDSCAPE."

"MY FAVOURITE PART OF THE TRIP WAS GOING TO THE SWIMMING POOL AND THE MANY MEMORIES AND LAUGHS WE SHARED WHILE EATING OUR CHEESE ROLLS"

"I REALLY ENJOYED EXPLORING AND GOING UP THE GLACIER"

The activity that followed was our third residential trip to the Trewern Outdoor Activities Centre in Wales. Students engaged in various activities including canoeing, gorge walking, mountain climbing and rock climbing.

When asked about Trewen they said:

"I ENJOYED THE ACTIVITIES AND I FACED MY FEAR OF BEING IN THE WATER SO I AM REALLY PROUD OF MYSELF"

This weekend was good. I made new friends, tried new things, and went on the water slide"

"THIS WEEKEND I HAD AN AMAZING TIME WE WENT GORGE WALKING, THE FOOD WAS GREAT, WE WENT UNDERNEATH THE WATERFALLS. I HAD THE MOST AMAZING TIME I COULD HAVE HAD"

We wrapped it up with a robotics club which took place over three days. Our young people made robots from Lego and just had fun programming their robots to dance, talk and pick up litter. This was facilitated by the London South Bank University. The smiles we saw on the students as their robots performed was a sight to behold.

'APPRECIATION CORNER'

The Virtual School's heartfelt appreciation goes to our colleague **Andrew Borwick-Fox** who is the **Service Manager for Corporate Parenting**.



Andrew has been such a great help in supporting the various projects of the Virtual School. Under his leadership we have resolved many challenging situations for young people and supported them to thrive in education. Andrew's leadership style has enabled a closer collaboration between the Virtual School and the Social Care Team which we are grateful for. As he moves on to his next phase professionally, we wish him all the best.

ATTENDANCE

Did you know that?

In August 2024 a new set of Attendance guidance was released including new codes and new rules for all schools and the local authority.

All schools from 19 August 2024 are legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. It is crucial therefore, for all schools to review the information on their systems for accuracy.

The attendance codes have also been updated and a link to the guidance, including the new codes can be found Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024).

As part of the guidance there is a focus on vulnerable pupils and the virtual school is now required to monitor and track the attendance of LBBd Looked After Children and Children with a Social Worker.

From November, there will be a comprehensive list which will be shared with all schools. For more information or clarification please contact Adela Kay : adela.kay@lbbd.gov.uk





E-LEARNING PLATFORM

I hope that the E-Learning Platform we launched last year has been useful to you and your schools.

COMING SOON

As promised this year, we are adding more units designed to support the vulnerable pupils' cohort, including:

- ASD for the mainstream classroom
- SEMH for the mainstream classroom
- SCLN for Primary
- SCLN for Secondary
- SCLN for pre-school and early years
- Neglect Strategy training for DSLs as well as Attachment and Trauma Training.

You can find the e-learning platform here [BDSIP e-learning - Aspire Virtual School.](#)

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all our DTs to log on and find out more!



POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING INTERVENTIONS FOR EBSA

1. All plans for intervention should be co-produced with the student, parents/carers, and appropriate agencies.
2. What works with one student may not work with another, so an assessment of the student's needs and behaviours is essential.
3. Plans/interventions should be realistic and achievable (don't try to solve too much too soon!).
4. The return to school should be gradual (quick fixes are rarely possible) but should include a return to school at the earliest opportunity. overwhelming.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Attendance is still an area of focus for all professionals working with young people.

Some of the reasons for non-attendance is known as EBSA which is emotion-based school avoidance. It is likely that there are multiple factors that contribute to why a child or young person may have difficulties attending school.

However, research suggests that there are typically **four main reasons for EBSA and related school avoidance behaviours**:

1. **To avoid something or situations that elicit negative feelings, high levels of stress, or low mood** (e.g. fear of toilets, noise in playground, tests/exams, academic demands).
2. **To avoid social situations that might be stressful or cause anxiety**, such as social pressure, peer bullying, or poor teacher relationships.
3. **To reduce separation anxiety or to gain attention from significant others**, such as parents or other family members
4. **To pursue rewarding experiences outside of school**, so avoiding school to engage in pleasurable activities such as going shopping or playing computer games during school time.
5. The student should have access to an identified member of school staff (e.g. a keyworker) who they can approach if their anxiety becomes
6. Consider a relapse prevention plan.

