



# Somerset Inclusion Virtual School & Learning Support Team



## VIRTUAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER TO SCHOOLS AUTUMN TERM 2022

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### MEETINGS/TRAINING DATES FOR AUTUMN 2022

#### DT network meetings

**AUTUMN TERM DATE—see PLAC conference details inside 12.10.22**

**9.2.2023 2:00-4:30 Dillington**

**25.5.2023 2:00-4:30 Dillington**

#### DT workshops

**8.12.2022 2:00- 4:00 Virtual**

**16.3.2023 2:00-4:00 Virtual**

**27.6.2023 2:00-4:00 Virtual**

#### Working with the Traumatized Child

**3.11.2022 (9.30-12.30) Dillington**

**10.11.2022 (9.30-12.30) Dillington**

**17.11. 2022 (9.30 – 1.30) Dillington**

#### Sensory Processing

**19.10.2022 9:30-12:30 Long Sutton golf club**

#### PLAC Conference

**12.10.2022 9:00 – 4:30 Long Sutton golf club**

Welcome back! I hope you all managed to have a break over the summer and that the new academic year has started well. Our summer term ended with the long anticipated inspection (Inspection of the Local Authority Children's Services—ILACS). The timing might not have been great but we were pleased with the opportunity to showcase the work of the Virtual School and all of the wider workforce in our schools. Thank you very much to all schools contacted by the inspection team for your reflections. We were delighted that the inspectors recognised our work to keep the children and young people at the heart of all our work and commented on our positive partnership working.

There are some changes to our team this year which we have set out for you on the final page of this newsletter. Zoe Crarer is currently on maternity leave and her work is being covered by Kennedy Coles who joins us from the statutory SEND team having been a SENCo in schools for many years. We have some colleagues stepping up into Lead Advisory Teacher roles this year, Claire Eastwood and Jackie Jones will be leading our CLA teams in the West and East respectively, Lucy Herring will be supporting Early Years CLA across the county and Elizabeth Fox will continue to develop the post 16 provision in her role leading that area.

Our work to strategically support those children and young people with a social worker will also develop this year and we look forward to working with you in this area as we explore how best to meet the needs of these vulnerable learners and bring about improved outcomes for them.

Please get in touch if we can help and keep us up to date with the successes of our young people as well as letting us know when things are not going so well.

**Emily Walters**

For more details of opportunities visit the training page of the VS website

[www.somersetvirtualschool.co.uk](http://www.somersetvirtualschool.co.uk)

To book places please visit the SSE website

[Support Services for Education](#)

and search for the event





## SEMHSNAPSHOTS

Look out for our **SEMHSNAPSHOTS** being sent out to schools during each term. If you do not appear to be receiving the Snapshot email, please check that we have your details on file by emailing [thevirtualschool@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:thevirtualschool@somerset.gov.uk). You can also use this email address to share any ideas you have for articles or strategies for future SEMHSNAPSHOTS, or any feedback about this developing resource. Links to all editions of the Snapshot are available on the resources page of our website in case you've missed them. **Resources – Somerset Virtual School**. Each edition has links to SEMH resources, ideas and practical suggestions to help support vulnerable learners.

Don't forget the *SEMHSNAPSHOTS Toolkit for Schools* Written by the Somerset Educational Psychology Service **SEMHSNAPSHOTS Toolkit**

### New Virtual School Training Offer to support SEMH

We are offering an enhanced range of awareness raising and staff development opportunities linked to Social Emotional and Mental Health needs this academic year. Details of all available sessions, intended outcomes and audiences, as well as the booking information is in the Virtual School & Learning Support Team offer which all schools receive. But to whet your appetite, these are the sessions available to schools this year:

#### ***Understanding Trauma and Developing Trauma Awareness***

***How to be the rainbow in a vulnerable child's cloud***  
***Roots to Shoots - Growing Trauma Informed Practice*** - Supporting the SEMH Needs of Care experienced Young People - Secondary

***Roots to Shoots - Growing Trauma Informed Practice*** - Supporting the SEMH Needs of Care experienced Children - Primary

***Pathways to positivity: Top tips to supporting vulnerable children with SEMH in the Early Years and Yr 1.***

#### ***Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow***

*Attendance Issues impacting our Vulnerable Learners*

***Resilience: Having it, Losing it and Teaching it***  
***Regulate, Relate, Reason***

***The Window of Tolerance – Understanding Trauma and Supporting Self-regulation***

## Some other useful SEMH Resources

You may well already be aware of the self-injury guide which Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust & Partners commissioned as a practical guide for schools and other partners in 2019. During the production of the guide numerous consultations were conducted with children in Somerset who would like 'self-harm' to be referred to as '**self-injury**'.

If you haven't yet accessed this guide, you can find a copy on our [website Self-Injury-GUIDE.pdf \(somersetvirtualschool.co.uk\)](https://www.somersetvirtualschool.co.uk/self-injury-guide.pdf)



We have been made aware of some training being provided within Somerset. Dates and registration details for **Self Harm Awareness training sessions for Parents, Carers and Family members** are now available. Please feel able to share this information with parents carers and family members you feel may benefit.

All courses are delivered virtually online either MS Teams or Zoom. Details and registration for different audiences will be available through [www.cypsomersethealth.org](http://www.cypsomersethealth.org) website [Training Menu](#) as soon as these sessions are open for booking

**Date** – Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**Time** – 1.00pm – 2.30pm

**Eventbrite Registration** - [Self Harm Awareness Registration 20 09 22](#)

**Date** – Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**Time** – 5.00pm – 6.30pm

**Eventbrite Registration** – [Self-Harm Awareness Registration 13 10 22](#)

**Date** – Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Time** – 10.00am – 11.30am

**Eventbrite Registration** - [Self Harm Awareness Registration 26 11 22](#)

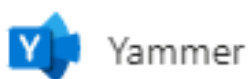
## KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH YAMMER

Many of you will be familiar with Yammer as a collaboration tool that helps you connect with colleagues, start conversations, share knowledge, and build communities. We have added a specific Designated Teachers area to the newly extended Inclusion Networks feed, which may provide a range of interesting connections and opportunities to link up with people or conversations.

Once logged in you can ask questions, respond to those of others, post thoughts or suggestions or useful resources etc.

If you have not yet checked out Yammer, you can request an invitation to access the Inclusion Networks by clicking on this link and following the single instruction

<https://www.yammer.com/sendnetworkcollaboration/#/threads/company?type=general>



Please encourage children and young people in care to explore [Somerset In Care and Leaving Care Councils – The website for the SiCC and SLCC care councils \(somersetincarecouncils.org.uk\)](http://somersetincarecouncils.org.uk) There is lots of useful information and links to activities and opportunities to have a say in how things work for Somerset's Children Looked After.

## Changes to support for Early Years Children Looked After

Just a reminder that previously Somerset's Early Years Area SENCo team supported pre-school settings with a Somerset Child Looked After (CLA). Following a restructuring of the Early Years Area SENCo team, from April 25th, the Virtual School and Learning Support Team (VS&LST) assumed responsibility for supporting our youngest CLA. During 2022-23, Lucy Herring, will be our VS Lead Advisory Teacher for Early Years CLA and so will be the main link with Early Years settings across the County, attending some PEP meetings and providing support to the settings as needed. Lucy will link with the EYASENCos and other key partners to provide joined up support. You can contact Lucy Lucy Herring on:

[LHerring@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:LHerring@somerset.gov.uk)

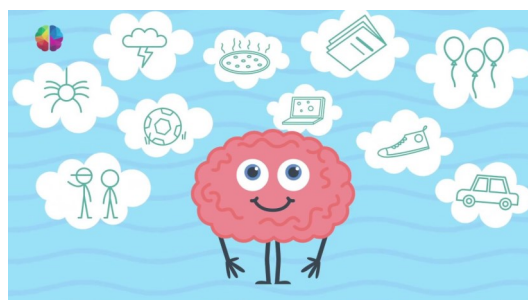
Our website

[www.somersetvirtualschool.co.uk](http://www.somersetvirtualschool.co.uk)

Is also being developed to have a specific Early Years focus page where you can find signposts to other services and support and items of interest in relation to CLA.

This is an exciting time for the Virtual School in extending its support to our youngest CLA and we are currently thinking about ways in which we can develop the existing offer of training and support to enhance the good practice that already exists for Early Years CLA. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please contact Lucy.

## Resource Recommendation



[Thought Bubbles! Mindfulness for Children. \(thought awareness\) - YouTube](#)



# PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN UPDATE



Free on-line Workshops with Dr Cassie Jackson from the Psychology Clinic of East Anglia (PCEA)

Dr Cassie Jackson is a clinical psychologist with over fourteen years of post-doctoral experience in working with children and families affected by neurodevelopmental disorders. She has expertise in assessing and diagnosing FASD and possible links to conditions such as Autism and ADHD.

Cassie also provides professional training in supporting families affected by FASD across the UK, to schools and virtual schools, social care teams, children's homes, and NHS paediatric teams to support them in developing FASD services.

In partnership with Adopt South West, Dr Jackson will be delivering a workshop for all those involved in education focusing on supporting children with FASD in the classroom.

**Teaching Children with FASD: Monday October 10<sup>th</sup> 10am – 12pm:**

This workshop is aimed at teachers and all those involved in the education of children with FASD. It will be supportive and practical! The workshop will examine the profile of children with FASD in school and explore the sorts of difficulties these children may have within the classroom and what helps.

**To book a place please click on the link** [Teaching Children with FASD - click here to book your ticket](#)

Please note we are limiting tickets to 2 per school, each ticket to be booked separately using the name of the attendee.

**BOOK NOW**



Since the role of the Designated Teacher expanded to include those children and young people who have previously been Looked After (PLAC) by the LA, we have been raising the profile of this cohort, their needs and how the DT can develop support in school.

Last year we held the first of our PLAC Conferences which was very successful. This year we are encouraging DTs to attend this conference which is offered free of charge by linking it with our autumn term Designated Teachers' Network meeting. Rather than asking you to attend two meetings this term, we ask you to join us for this one day conference on October 12th.

This conference is not being offered as an online event and attendance must be for the whole day. Lunch is provided. Booking is essential and places are limited. Please book here

[Support Services for Education](#)



**Somerset Inclusion  
Virtual School &  
Learning Support Team**

## **Supporting the Education, Well-being and Progress of Previously Looked After Children**

October 12<sup>th</sup> 2022, Long Sutton Golf Club, 9.00 – 4.30



*This event is designed to support school staff working to meet the needs of Previously Looked After Children. This complex cohort includes children and young people adopted from Local Authority Care and those on Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Orders.*

By attending this event we hope delegates will have a greater understanding of how relationships between staff, pupils, parents and carers can enable recovery from trauma and ability to access learning.

### **Keynote Speaker: Kate Cairns**

Kate is an author, speaker and trainer with an international reputation for her work around attachment, trauma and resilience, particularly in relation to vulnerable children and young people.

### **Relationships for Learning: the five things staff do every day that make a difference for vulnerable children and young people.**

A keynote providing Five to Thrive as a way of recognising the connected relationships that underpin learning and showing how these connected relationships promote recovery from trauma at a time when this is a key need in our communities. The presentation will then link this understanding to the teaching and learning toolkit provided by the EEF, showing how meeting needs in relation to recovery from trauma can give the most vulnerable learners access to interventions that otherwise would be ineffective for them, evidence-based interventions for closing the attainment gap.

**A programme of workshops will be available in the afternoon led by Adopt SW, Educational Psychology Service, and the Kinship Team, followed by a Q&A session with workshop leads and Virtual School Colleagues.**

One space is available free of charge to all schools with Somerset CLA/PLAC on roll. Additional places can be purchased at a cost of £50 per person. This conference is fully subsidised by Somerset Virtual School. Booking for this PLAC Conference is essential via the SSE website [PLAC conference](#) | [Support Services for Education](#)

## PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS (PEPs) UPDATE

Many thanks to all schools that responded to the review of the ePEP at the end of the first year of our work with Welfare Call. It was very helpful to understand the things that you feel work well and where you feel there could be improvements in both the questions asked and the format of the ePEP.

We engaged with all our partners during this review and have made a number of changes as a result of the responses. The format will not look hugely different but there is greater direction where sections can be omitted, a more focused section on SEND and additional support which is linked to the new [Graduated Response Tool](#), and more clarity around progress and attainment questions.

## ATTENDANCE MONITORING FOR SOMERSET CLA

We are sure you are aware of our need to carefully monitor and support the attendance of our Children looked After and, under the extension of duties remit, to also work with schools to improve the attendance of all children and young people with a social worker.

From 25th April the attendance of all Somerset's Statutory School Age CLA has been collected by Welfare Call, the same organisation that manages our ePEP. This change is our attempt to ensure the attendance data collection and management makes as few demands on very busy education settings as possible.

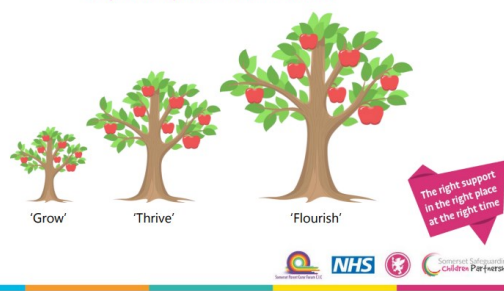
A letter went into all schools at the end of the spring term outlining this change and any implications for schools. You can find a copy of this letter here

[WFC Attendance monitoring intro letter.doc](#)

If you have any questions about our attendance monitoring please email [thervirtualschool@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:thervirtualschool@somerset.gov.uk)

## Somerset's Graduated Response Tool

Ordinarily Available Provision for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs



## Somerset's Graduated Response Tool

Somerset's Graduated Response Tool guides users through how barriers to learning could be identified, and the strategies that might support children and young people with SEN in overcoming barriers.

In our work supporting CLA, PLAC and those children with a social worker, we have found the SEMH section of this document particularly useful. The SEMH quick checker, for example, offers a really effective way of scaffolding conversations with parents, carers and staff and considering needs and suitable next steps.

### Quick Checker

Quick Checker for Social, Emotional and Mental Health

There are concerns about the child or young person's:	Y/N
Ability to plan, attend, organise, regulate themselves and manage change.	
Level of hyper vigilance and their disproportionate 'fight, flight, freeze' response.	
Attendance at school.	
Maintaining healthy peer relationships and friendships.	
Behaviour at home that may not be seen at school.	
Engagement with the curriculum.	
Changes in demeanour and/or appearance.	
Unpredictability of behaviour with lack of obvious triggers.	
Low confidence and/or self-esteem.	
Failure to make anticipated progress across many areas of the curriculum.	

Within the revised ePEP we ask schools to focus more closely on the support mechanisms in place for CLA and refer to the Graduated Response tool in outlining what has already been put in place and what might be considered next. Do familiarise yourself with the document, which is available here:

[Graduated Response Tool](#)

# **VIRTUAL SCHOOL & LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM**

## **CLA SUPPORT 2021-22**

### **(UPDATED JANUARY 2022)**

#### **WEST**

**Lead Advisory Teacher - Claire Eastwood**

##### **Advisory Teachers**

- ♦ **Cassie Jones**
- ♦ **Julie Hunt**
- ♦ **Kennedy Coles**
- ♦ **Jo Milum**
- ♦ **Nicky Harper**

##### **Learning Mentors**

- ♦ **Ali Lewis**
- ♦ **Polly Slade**

#### **EAST**

**Lead Advisory Teacher - Jackie Jones**

##### **Advisory Teachers**

- ♦ **Heidi Humpage**
- ♦ **Helen Berryman (LAT for SEND)**
- ♦ **Mark Long (LAT for SEND)**
- ♦ **Sian Biggs**
- ♦ **Wendy Birkett**
- ♦ **Louise Conway- Byron**

##### **Learning Mentors**

- ♦ **Kerry Ashworth**
- ♦ **Catherine Steadman**

#### **County Wide Support**

**Lead Advisory Teacher (Post 16) - Elizabeth Fox**

**Post 16 Education Officer - Gary Roper**

**Lead Advisory Teacher (Early Years) - Lucy Herring**



[Link to the SCC Inclusion Directory—Virtual School 2022-23](#)

or check out [VS website Training and development page](#)

## **GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL & LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM**

If you are not sure who you need to contact about a particular CLA, please email

[thevirtualschool@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:thevirtualschool@somerset.gov.uk)

and your query will be directed to the right person. This mailbox is staffed year round although much of the advisory team works during school term time.

If you have a query about Previously Looked After Children, we have a dedicated mailbox for these questions [PLACSomersetInclusion@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:PLACSomersetInclusion@somerset.gov.uk)

The Virtual School website remains a source of information and provides links to a range of resources and guidance including support for completing PEPs, Education Plans for Previously Looked After Children (EPPLAC) and the current Pupil Premium Policy [www.somersetvirtualschool.co.uk](http://www.somersetvirtualschool.co.uk)